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A PROGRAM OF EDUCATION FOR ALASKAN NATIVES.
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THE MAJOR OBJECTIVE OF THIS STUDY WAS TO DEVELOP A PROGRAM OF EDUCATION FOR THE NATIVE PEOPLES OF ALASKA (INDIAN AND ESKIMO) WHICH WILL ENCOURAGE AND ENABLE THEM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LIFE OF ALASKA ON A SELF-SUSTAINING AND SELF-RESPECTING BASIS. THIS STUDY BEGAN WITH AN EXAMINATION OF OFFICIAL MEMORANDUMS, STUDY GUIDES, AND OTHER LITERATURE PERTAINING TO NATIVE EDUCATION WHICH ARE CONTAINED IN THE FILES OF THE TERRITORIAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF THE ALASKA NATIVE SERVICE AT JUNEAU. INFORMATION WAS GATHERED BY SAMPLING THE OPINIONS OF NATIVE ADULTS TO IDENTIFY ATTITUDES AND ASPIRATIONS HELD BY PARENTS CONCERNING THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN. ADDITIONAL DATA UTILIZED INCLUDED ACHIEVEMENT TEST RESULTS OF NATIVE CHILDREN ATTENDING THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND TERRITORIAL SCHOOLS, ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDIES OF ALASKAN NATIVES, AND INTERVIEWS WITH LEADERS, BOTH NATIVE AND OTHER, WHO ARE FAMILIAR WITH EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS IN ALASKA. THE STUDY INCLUDED EDUCATION ON THREE LEVELS--ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY, AND HIGHER. AN ENORMOUS GAP IN THE EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING STILL EXISTS BETWEEN NATIVES AND NON-NATIVES. IT WAS CONCLUDED THAT THE IMMEDIATE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM MUST BE PLANNED TO ACCOUNT FOR THE ENORMOUS DIFFERENCES IN THE BACKGROUNDS, VALUES, AND ORIENTATION OF THE NATIVE STUDENTS. THE LONG-RANGE OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHOOLS MUST BE POINTED TOWARD AN EVENTUAL COMMON EDUCATION FOR ALL. (GC)

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A PROGRAM OF EDUCATION FOR ALASKAN NATIVES

A Research Report

by

Charles K. Ray
Executive Director

Alaskan Native Education Project

The research herein was performed pursuant to a contract with the United States Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

ED002788

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INTRODUCTION

The education of Alaskan natives has come under increasing scrutiny in the past fifty years and has been the cause of considerable controversy. Like a group of sidewalk superintendents who are watching the construction of a skyscraper, almost every Alaskan and every visitor to Alaska has an opinion as to what should be done.

One viewpoint encompasses the extreme back-to-the blanket thinking characterized by the belief that all of the unhappiness and the evil which have befallen Alaska's natives can be attributed to the influence of, and contact with, non-natives. As a solution, therefore, it is implied that most non-native contacts should be withdrawn, education should be focused on preparation for life in the native villages, and life should continue in the relatively primitive state that existed before the coming of the outsiders. Or, at least, those elements of the white culture which are allowed to filter into the native communities should be sifted and screened carefully to prevent possible contamination of the natives. The migration of natives from the villages to the larger population centers should be discouraged -- or more drastic still, prevented at all costs.

The opposite extreme position is that Alaska is a booming Territory which has recently become a state. The existence of aborigines who are not completely acculturated represents a burden which must be carried by those taxpayers and progressive citizens who are working for the betterment of Alaska. Therefore, the most rapid absorption possible of the native groups into the dominant culture is favored.[1] From the standpoint of education, the implications concomitant with this point of view are for integration of native schools into public schools wherever possible and the establishment of boarding schools and dormitories which will provide for the removal of students from their home and village environment in communities where public schools do not exist.

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[1] The dominant or majority culture refers to the Western, or European, culture throughout this report even though in many communities the non-native population is in a minority as far as numbers are concerned. Cook and Cook describe this concept of the majority and minority as follows:

"Numbers are significant, yet they do not identify a sociological majority. In South Africa, to illustrate, natives outnumber whites many times, yet whites would be called the majority group, the natives a minority.

. . . .

"What has just been said could be read as embracing three points of crucial importance, but it is best to make them very explicit. One is a status difference, with minorities in general lower-status people, less prestigeful groups. The second is a power differential, with majorities having by far the greater power of decision-making. These two factors imply a third, the life chances of individuals. Everywhere, majorities are likely to be the gatekeepers of cultural opportunities, opening and closing doors. In many places, they clearly hold the key to health and housing, to jobs, schooling, political office and the like. This is really the functional significance of the majority-minority dichotomy, the point most meaningful to educators." (Lloyd and Elaine Cook, Intergroup Education New York: [McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1954], pp. 9-10.)

While both positions are oversimplified and possibly overstated, the existence of such diverse attitudes among persons actively involved in education as well as by other citizens of the Territory led to a realization of the need for a comprehensive survey of the program of education for Alaskan natives.

In the autumn of 1956 an application was submitted by the University of Alaska to the United States Office of Education for financial assistance under the provisions of Public Law 531 in carrying out such a survey. The application was approved. Funds were made available to support an investigation of native education at the elementary school, secondary school, and college levels.

Realistically, with a comprehensive survey designed to include a territory approximately 586,000 square miles in area and including 155 schools enrolling one half or more native students with a total enrollment of approximately 8,800 children, much detail and specialized research had to be sacrificed. However, the planners of the project envisioned a pilot study which would deal broadly with basic yet crucial areas in education and provide a foundation for future specific and more detailed inquiries which admittedly are needed badly.

A first step in setting up the framework for the survey was the establishment of a Central Coordinating

Committee to give broad and general direction to the research. The instigator and general director of the study, Dr. William K. Keller, decided that this committee should remain small and functional, yet include representatives from the three organizations concerned with public schools in Alaska: the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Alaska Territorial Department of Education, and the University of Alaska. A five-man committee, selected on the basis of educational training, experience in Alaskan education, knowledge of Alaskan natives, and present key professional position, was appointed to serve in this capacity throughout the duration of the study. (A list of members of the Coordinating Committee is included in Appendix A.)

After the Coordinating Committee was selected, an Executive Director was appointed whose task was to conduct the research study along the broad lines established by the committee. As time and funds permitted, villages from representative geographical areas were visited,[1] conditions observed, interviews conducted, and statistics obtained from school records. (A complete list of communities included on the travel itinerary is listed in Appendix B.)

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[1] Because of limitation of funds, it was not possible to travel to all native schools in Alaska. Therefore, those communities visited were selected on the basis of several criteria: (1) ease of accessibility; (2) representative geographical location; (3) size; (4) special interest occasioned by unusual conditions such as especially low dropout rate, particularly high academic standing on tests, outstanding success of students in higher education, etc. Specific areas such as the Nome district were purposely omitted because the Executive Director, having spent several years as a teaching principal on St. Lawrence Island, was familiar with conditions in those regions. Few stations on the Kuskokwim River were included because information about this region was available through the experience and knowledge of persons working closely with various phases of the study.

Periodic meetings were held in which members of the Coordinating Committee evaluated the progress of the study and suggested revisions and new areas to be considered for investigation. With two members of the committee residing in Juneau (which is approximately 700 air miles from the University of Alaska) and all members maintaining extremely energetic professional schedules, it was not possible to arrange meetings as frequently as desired. However, numerous consultations were held with individual members of the committee in addition to the general scheduled conferences; therefore, the thoughts and suggestions of these selected leaders permeate the entire report.

For the purpose of clarification certain definitions and delimitations of the study were established. The term "native" will be used throughout the report to refer only to persons of aboriginal stock which comprises Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts. Since the statistics of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and most Territorial Department of Education records include in the category "native" only those persons possessing one-fourth or more aboriginal blood, this qualification will also be adopted.

Nearly all of the public schools in Alaska are integrated unless residence prevents this integration. For example, for the school year 1956-57, the public schools of Anchorage and Fairbanks enrolled a total of 11,416 pupils, 584 of whom were native.[1] Therefore, to narrow the focus of this study more directly upon schools enrolling (and operated primarily for) native students, the integrated schools included in the survey were restricted to schools with current total enrollments comprising one-half or more native pupils. (A complete list of schools included in the study is found in Appendix C.)

Additional studies were conducted of five integrated schools in Fairbanks where native students were a minority to determine the comparative level of achievement of native and non-native students and to ascertain educational and sociological problems faced by these students. Private and denominational schools, enrolling a total of 536 native pupils,[2] were excluded from the study.

For many years leaders in educational research have realized that there is a considerable gap between research findings and the actual implementation of these findings in educational practice. One important cause for this gap can be explained by the fact that the persons who conduct research are seldom responsible for decisions which affect vitally the educational process. According to Corey, fewer than ten per cent of approximately nine hundred persons affiliated with the American Educational Research Association in 1952 were supervisors or administrators. Classroom teachers numbered fewer than five. Staff bureau researchers and professors of education were in a large majority.[1]

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[1] Statistics furnished by the Territorial Commissioner of Education.

[2] *Ibid.*

The realization that a great majority of research findings so elaborately prepared by the professional investigator merely collects dust in libraries of teacher training institutions and exerts negligible influence upon the schools argues strongly for the involvement of more educational practitioners in the research process than commonly occurs. With the sincere hope that the recommendations in the present study may, in some way, influence the day-by-day operation of the native schools, considerable attention was given to the active involvement of in-service teachers and administrators as well as a number of mature graduate students with varied educational experience. Many of these persons have, under supervision, carried out relatively independent research studies pertaining to the education of Alaskan natives and have helped in the analyses and interpretations of selected data. (Names of persons participating in the study and topics investigated are listed in Appendix D.)

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[1] Stephen M. Corey, Action Research to Improve School Practices (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953), pp. 3-4.

In addition to the greater likelihood that research involving educational practitioners will change practice, other values from cooperative research are apparent. They include the increased probability that cooperative research recommendations will be realistic. Teachers are not likely to suggest practices which are so time-consuming that they will never be implemented. Such proposals would only be made by one who did not intend to carry them out.[1]

Also, the involvement of persons with varied educational backgrounds, aptitudes, talents, and experiences enriches the quality of the recommendations.[2] In the present study, care was taken to select teachers and administrators who had educational experience from both agencies operating the native schools in Alaska (the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Territorial Department of Education) so as to minimize the effects of possible bias, policy orientation by the employing agency, and a background completely foreign to the problems under consideration.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Territorial Department of Education gave invaluable cooperation and support to the study. Both agencies agreed to make available selected personnel for full-time participation in the project while providing a substitute at their own expense to replace these persons where practicable. However, the isolation of many of the schools, expenses involved in providing transportation and living accommodations, and the difficulty of securing competent substitute teachers and administrators in the small and remote native schools did influence considerably the selection of in-service participants. Fortunately, however, several graduate students participating in the research have had experience working in such varied and geographically representative communities as Fort Yukon, King Island, Klawock, Rampart, Teller, and Tununak. Consequently, the viewpoints brought to bear upon the problems under investigation are diverse and particularly valuable.

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[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

[2] *Ibid.*

In addition to those actively engaged in related investigations, many persons were consulted about various phases of the project. It is not possible to acknowledge by name all who contributed to the study. Educational specialists, teachers, administrators, and long-time Alaskan residents offered valuable advice and provided information and insights which are attainable only after years of experience and first-hand acquaintance with conditions relevant to the subject of native education. A partial list of those with whom different phases of the project have been discussed and who have made valuable contributions is included in Appendix E. To those whose names are not included, general, yet sincere, appreciation is expressed.

As a basis for any educational program, there must be an understanding of the type of education which is desired and which will receive the support of those for whom the program is designed. Throughout the history of the world, education, formal and informal, has been shaped to meet the demands of the society in which it occurs. Much of the criticism which is leveled at the native schools in Alaska is to the effect that the program of education for Alaskan natives has been designed for non-native pupils from a different culture and is therefore inappropriate and without realistic goals.

One important phase of the present study has been an attempt to obtain from the native people themselves indications of their enthusiasm for education, criticisms of the present program, and basically the objectives of education which they envision as the most desirable for the schools to pursue.[1] (A guide listing areas on which

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[1] While conducting interviews, the Executive Director found on occasion that if the question, "What do you want your child to do when he grows up?" was asked, the reply might be, "Whatever he wants to do." However, more general questioning such as, "For what kinds of jobs should the children from this village be trained?" or "How much education does the majority of the children need before their schooling ends?" received precise and thoughtful replies.

The fact that some parents avoided answers which would impose their ambitions and aspirations upon their own children can be explained in part by the permissive relationship which exists between parents and their offspring. Stefansson illustrates the complete permissiveness allowed Eskimo children in an account given in his book, My Life With the Eskimos. Further, he explains the reason for parental permissiveness by describing the Eskimo be-interviews focused is included in Appendix F.)

Careful consideration was given to a method by which valid native opinion might be obtained. Mass sampling techniques, such as questionnaires and opinionnaires, were rejected immediately as being infeasible for several reasons. First, information reported in the 1950 census indicates that 30 per cent of the non-white population in Alaska twenty-five years of age and older has received no schooling. (While the category "non-white" includes races other than natives, the aboriginal population comprises 93 1/3 per cent of the non-white group.)[1] Second, many native people in learning to live in harmony with members from the dominant culture have accepted a behavior pattern by which they tend to express opinions which they believe will be popular or acceptable rather than stating their con-

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lief that the soul of the deceased returns and enters the body of the new-born child, thereby directing all future actions of the child. Any parental control or criticism, therefore, not only indicates irreverence for the deceased but a questioning of the wisdom of the one whose soul has returned to the child. Assuming a normal death, this person is ordinarily an older person with more experience and wisdom than the younger parent possesses.

While Christian missionary activities in Alaska have influenced these beliefs to some extent, considerable freedom from punishment and parental direction is still characteristic of the Eskimo child's home life. (Vilhjalmur Stefansson, My Life with the Eskimos New York: [Macmillan Co., 1937], pp. 123-28.)

[1] U. S. Bureau of the Census, Seventeenth Census of the United States: 1950. Population, Vol. II, Sec. 51 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1953), p. 51.

victions.[1] In addition, the use of questionnaires or opinionnaires necessitates a certain degree of competence in reading and writing English. Since the majority of the people in the remote villages would have no familiarity with instruments of this type, the predicted result was that many of the forms would be completed for the natives by teachers and missionaries -- thereby inadvertently representing teacher and missionary opinion rather than native opinion.

As an alternative, a "blue-ribbon jury technique" was substituted by means of which outstanding native leaders were selected by members of the Coordinating Committee and other key Alaskan residents. The selected leaders were chosen on the basis of three major criteria. Persons were chosen who, it was felt, would speak freely and honestly, would present enlightened thinking on educational issues, and would in part possess insights into the attitudes and aspirations of larger groups within their representative villages. (A complete list of persons interviewed and their home villages is included in Appendix G.)

Certain weaknesses of the "jury" plan for obtaining native opinion are readily apparent. There is a possibility that a considerable gap exists between the aspirations and opinions of village leaders and those held by the majority of the other members of the community. Perhaps more important is the difficulty of selecting true village leaders and opinion-makers rather than apparent leaders who have pushed themselves into positions of eminence but who have not gained the respect or support of the majority of the people.

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[1] Statement by Dr. Ivar Skarland (Head, Department of Anthropology, University of Alaska), transcribed tape recording of the Coordinating Committee meeting, University of Alaska, July 24, 1957.

Safeguards were taken to minimize the effects of these weaknesses. In various villages, native residents and members of organized groups such as village councils were selected at random and questioned about the same problems which the leaders were asked to discuss. In practically all instances the replies received from the random sampling corresponded closely with those offered by the village leaders.[1] No positive method was found to prevent the selection of "false leaders" for interviewing. Caution was used, however, in making the nominations, and reliance was placed on the judgment of the members of the Coordinating Committee appointed to direct the study. All members of this committee have had valuable experience working in the fields of Alaskan education and anthropology.

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[1] This fact corroborated the statements of two members of the Coordinating Committee, Mr. Max Penrod and Dr. Ivar Skarland, whose experiences led them to believe that native leaders would in the main express collective village opinion rather than personal views which would not receive the concurrence of the group. (Transcribed tape recording of the Coordinating Committee meeting, University of Alaska, July 24, 1957.)

The strengths of the described interview method over that of a written instrument are overwhelming. Through interviews it was possible to pursue many promising lines of inquiry and discuss regional problems which are not applicable to other areas of the Territory. Without doubt, in specific instances answers which tended to be especially frank or otherwise confidential in nature were received which would not have been submitted in written form.

By the selection of known interviewees, oral communication was possible in all cases without resort to native translators. Possible misunderstanding caused by language factors was minimized, which aided considerably in the establishment of rapport and generally heightened the satisfaction of the interview. In addition, while the community leaders usually had a clear insight into the attitudes of the other villagers about educational matters, they possessed as well a general awareness of the problems involved and offered promising suggestions for solutions.

In summary, many diverse and conflicting opinions pertaining to native education were received. Certainly no attempt was made to suggest the implementation of all of those practices upon which a consensus was obtained, but rather these native attitudes constituted one important type of data relevant to the problems under consideration.

And while no single source of information supplied the basis for conclusions drawn and recommendations made, the importance of native opinion should not be minimized. Traditionally, the strength of the American educational system has been in its citizen control whereby the demands of a changing society are reflected in the objectives of the public schools. Therefore, any proposed educational plan for Alaskan natives must include a sincere attempt to obtain a representative sampling of native opinion as to what the schools are expected to do. While inevitably there is a gap between educational aspirations and the amount of active support that will be given any educational program, the desire for education -- and for a particular type of education -- cannot be ignored.

The purpose of the study, therefore, is to develop broad yet encompassing guidelines for a program of education for Alaskan natives. These guidelines are based upon an analysis of data collected from experts in various fields, laymen, statistical information, and technical references.

CHAPTER I

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIVE EDUCATION IN ALASKA

Introduction of Education in Alaska

The opening of the Aleutian Islands to the Russian fur trade in the 1740's and the establishment of the first permanent settlement at Kodiak in 1784 marked the beginning of a hundred year period of Russian domination of Alaska. Russian economic expansion into the new territory was coupled with missionary activities on the part of the official Russian Orthodox Church, and in the course of several decades the Aleuts and Eskimos inhabiting the Southwestern coast of Alaska became civilized and intermarried with the Russian settlers.

Schools were established during this period. However, while natives were allowed to attend, these schools were designed primarily to serve the Russian population. The educational objectives were two-fold: to teach the Orthodox catechism and to provide vocational training for those children who would later become employees of the Russian-American Company, the state-chartered organization which governed the new colony and exploited its resources for the benefit of St. Petersburg. No attempt was made by the Russians to establish special schools for the Alaskan natives or to use their schools specifically as a civilizing force.[1]

The purchase of Alaska from Russia by the United States in 1867 marked the decline of the Russian system of education. However, as late as 1887 the Russian government appropriated an annual sum of $20,000 for the maintenance of parochial schools in the Aleutians and Southern Alaska.[2]

The seventeen years following the American purchase of Alaska in 1867 marked a period of almost complete neglect of the new Territory by the United States government. No civil government existed. In the words of an American officer of the Coast Survey, "There are literally no civil law, no government, no redress for injury, no protection for whites or natives, no legal authority for settlement, and no punishment for crime."[3] The authority of the military commander at Sitka, the capital, extended only over his own men except for his authority to punish native uprisings. Revenue officers had authority over offenders of customs and internal revenue laws. And special Treasury agents on the Pribilof Islands could prevent infringements of the monopoly lease granted by Congress to the Alaska Commercial Company for the killing of fur seals.[1] With these few exceptions, the Federal government virtually forgot about the existence of its new possession.

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[1] A general description of education during the Russian period is given in Tikhon I. Lavrischeff, "History of Education in Alaska" (Unpublished Ed. D. thesis, Department of Education, University of California, 1935).

[2] Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1886-87 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1888), p. 43. Hereafter, these reports will be cited as Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education.

[3] Ibid., 1875, p. 465.

Little was known about the native inhabitants of Alaska, their habits of living, and their needs. However, a few general reports filtered through to Washington, and in 1875 John Eaton, U. S. Commissioner of Education, received a letter from Dr. William H. Dall, an American scientist and explorer, describing the characteristics of the various native peoples and stating his opinions concerning their educability.

The Indians of Southeastern Alaska he characterized as a bad lot. "Bold, impudent, fond of liquor, which they manufacture from molasses bought of the whites, ready to use their weapons on any provocation, vindictive, and sensual, they only attract admiration for their courage and unusual intelligence . . . . I fear they cannot be considered amenable to any system of education disconnected from the 'strong arm.'"[2]

Dall described the Interior, or Athabascan, Indians as "essentially wild at present . . . . Few of them speak anything but their own language, and these few only add to ha!

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[1] Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1875, p. 465.

[2] Ibid., p. 464.

it a little Russian. None of them have [sic] been subjected to any educational processes . . . and they cannot be said to offer much of a field for instruction at present."[1]

The Eskimos, on the other hand, greatly impressed Dall, who considered them to be a more intelligent and adaptable group than the Indians. Despite the fact that, according to Dall, they had been demoralized by contact with Russian priests around Kodiak and by "the annual alcohol traders of the Arctic coast and Kotzebue Sound," he considered that the Eskimos "offer more qualifications for benefiting by instruction than any I have yet mentioned."[2]

Dall believed the Aleuts to be a people of remarkable intelligence, although he realized that they were more nearly civilized than the other Alaskan natives due to prolonged Russian influence. He described them as being remarkably intelligent "considering how lately they have been redeemed from barbarism," eager to learn, and a few of them at Unalaska so desirous of education that they established a school of their own "in order that their children may be able to read the Russian catechism."[3]

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[1] Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1875, p. 464.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., pp. 464-66.

Dall's report, as well as others,[1] pictured the Alaskan natives primarily as an uncivilized people and pointed to the necessity for decisive action on the part of the federal government to provide an educational program designed to familiarize them with the American way of life. However, no government action of any kind was forthcoming until 1884.

Although no public school system existed, Alaska was not without schools of any kind. Two schools for natives were supported by the Alaska Commercial Company on the Pribilof Islands. And, as mentioned above, the Russian Orthodox Church maintained schools in the Aleutians, Southwestern Alaska, and Sitka. However, the principal educational advances made during the period before 1884 were sponsored by the Presbyterian Church which established several mission schools for Indians at Sitka, Wrangell, and other points in Southeastern Alaska. Whereas the objectives of the Russian Orthodox Church were primarily religious in character, the avowed purposes of the Presbyterian missions were not only the spread of Christianity to the heathens but also the introduction of civilizing forces designed to develop independent citizenship on the part of the natives.[2]

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[1] Sheldon Jackson, Superintendent of Presbyterian missions in Alaska, reported on educational conditions among the natives as did Ivan Petroff, Special Agent of the U. S. Census Bureau. (Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1880. pp. 350-51; Ibid., 1882-83, pp. 278-82.)

[2] Stated in a letter from Sheldon Jackson to the Commissioner of Education, Ibid., p. 281.

Establishment of Public Schools

By 1884 the necessity for establishing a public school system as well as providing for other governmental functions had become apparent in Washington. Therefore, Congress passed the First Organic Act which was signed by President Arthur on May 17, 1884. This act not only established a civil government for Alaska but also provided for the organization of a school system by stating that "the Secretary of the Interior shall make needful and proper provision for the education of children of school age in the Territory of Alaska, without reference to race."[1] The schools were to be administered by the Bureau of Education, and in 1885 the Secretary of the Interior appointed Sheldon Jackson, Superintendent of Presbyterian Missions, as General Agent of Education in Alaska.[2]

Since Congress had appropriated only $25,000 for the organization and administration of schools in Alaska, the problem became readily apparent as to how this scant sum could be utilized to the best advantage. Jackson soon had the answer. With his missionary background, and apparently unconcerned by the growing tradition of the separation of church and state in American education,[1] Jackson enlisted the support of missionary groups and persuaded the Federal government to subsidize mission schools where they were available as well as to construct new government schools.[2] This action had a two-fold effect. It enabled the establishment of schools in native villages throughout the Territory. It also hastened the arrival of various mission groups by providing government support.

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[1] U. S. Statutes at Large, Vol. XXIII, pp. 27-28 (1885).

[2] Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1884-85, p. 286.

By 1889 schools were in existence in all regions of

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[1] The problem of church-state relationships in Alaskan education was recognized by many, including Governor Lyman E. Knapp who stated, "While I still approve most heartily the general principle which demands a complete separation of church and state and recognize the unwisdom of granting Government aid to sectarian schools, and would make few exceptions to the rule, my observation of educational work and results in Alaska has led me to modify the extreme views I formerly held.

"Alaska has a school population of about 10,000. Of these children only about 500, or one-twentieth part, can be said to have attended the Government day schools the past year [1891-92].

"It can scarcely be expected that Congress will increase its appropriation sufficiently to establish and maintain Government schools in the three hundred villages of this vast territory. Religious and benevolent people of eleven different sects have undertaken work of an educational character among the ignorant and barbarous peoples that inhabit these villages. Part of that work is teaching them our language, our laws, and our customs -- in other words, preparing them to become worthy citizens of the Republic. Shall a little sentiment, or a pet theory not applicable here, prevent our encouraging these noble agencies for the accomplishment of the very work we, as a nation, desire to accomplish, and which there is no hope of our doing ourselves?" (Report of the Governor of Alaska for the Fiscal Year 1892 [Washington: Government Printing Office, 1892], p. 54. Hereafter, these reports will be cited as Governor's Report.)

[2] Ernest Gruening, The State of Alaska (New York: Random House, 1954), p. 61.

Alaska.[1] In addition to several public schools in Southeastern Alaska and on the islands along the coast of the Alaska Peninsula, mission schools were rapidly being opened throughout the Territory. And of course, the Russian schools in Sitka, Southwestern Alaska, and the Aleutians as well as the two schools in the Pribilof Islands continued to function, although they did not receive government aid.

Federal subsidization of church schools continued until 1895 when the Bureau of Education discontinued the policy of granting contracts to missionary organizations for educational activities and began to take over many of these schools as public institutions.[2]

Objectives of Early Public Education for Natives

The Organic Act of 1884 had provided for "the education of children of school age in the Territory of Alaska, without reference to race.[3] However, although a few white children did attend the schools in Sitka and Juneau, the vast majority of the Alaskan population was native, and the public school system established under the Bureau of Education came to be looked upon as a native school system.

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[1] However, the vast majority of natives were without any educational benefits. According to Gruening, "Twenty years after the federal government had assumed that responsibility at least three-quarters of the native children were without schooling. One hundred and seventy-seven native villages with a school population of four thousand were unprovided with school facilities in 1905." (Gruening, The State of Alaska, p. 361.)

[2] Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Years 1918-1920 (Juneau: Juneau Daily Capital, 1920), p. 31. Hereafter, these reports will be cited as Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education.

[3] Italics mine.

Increased contact with the white culture on the part of Alaskan natives had caused certain modifications in their habits of living since Dall's early description in 1875. By 1892 Governor Knapp was able to report that many Indians of the Southeast coast could speak English freely and that a few of them could read and write. The Aleuts he described as having "become thoroughly Russianized. They talk Russian, belong to the Russian orthodox church, shade off into Russian blood, features, and complexion, and affect Russian ideas. They are rapidly fading away."[1] These descriptions make quite a contrast with those of Dall. Knapp's descriptions of the Eskimos and Interior Indians coincide more closely with those of Dall; however, the Eskimos did not appear to be as intelligent to Knapp as they did to Dall. According to Knapp:

> The Athabascans and Eskimos have come less under the influences of contact with white people than the other tribes, and therefore retain more of their original customs and peculiarities . . . . They find it necessary to exercise the utmost of their energies and of their ingenuity to secure a bare subsistence, and their ideas have not risen much above the level of animal existence. Physically they are strong and comparatively

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[1] Governor's Report, 1892, p. 57.

> healthy; mentally they lack vigor; morally they substitute expediency for right.[1]

It can be seen that the majority of natives was considered to be uncivilized, or at the most semi-civilized. The official educational policy of the United States government, therefore, was to civilize the natives and to help them to become self-respecting and independent citizens. Justification for this policy was set forth by the U. S. Commissioner of Education in an official statement:

> It is conceded that the perpetuity of our American institutions depends in great measure upon the intelligence of its citizens, and that this intelligence is due in no small degree to our system of common schools and public education. If it be true that the intelligence of the American citizen is so necessary to the security and enjoyment of his liberties, how much more important is it that the native races, who are now being endowed with all the rights of citizenship, shall be prepared by education to appreciate and enjoy their new privileges, and to understand their new obligations and political relations. Especially is this true of the people of Alaska, whom the government has undertaken by its treaty stipulations to place upon an equal footing with its own citizens.[2]

To implement these objectives, the Bureau of Education[3] put forth a two-fold program of education.

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[1] Governor's Report, 1892, pp. 56-57.

[2] Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1886-87, p. 42.

[3] While educational policy was officially approved in Washington, because of the great distances and slow communications virtually all of the educational decisions, in terms of policy as well as of administration, were made by Sheldon Jackson who continued in his post as General Educational Agent from 1885 to 1908.

The great majority of natives was to be educated in the villages. According to the *Rules and Regulations of Public Schools and Education in the Territory*, put out by the Secretary of the Interior in 1887, "a common school should be established in every settlement where there are children in sufficient number, and at least one school in every tribe of Indians or native settlement."[1] The curriculum of these early village schools was rather limited. The official rules stated that "the children are primarily to be taught to speak, read, and write the English language."[2] However, possibly as a concession to the Protestant religious groups responsible for the major part of the educational work in Alaska whose church services emphasize the use of music and singing, it was added that "vocal music may also be taught in the schools."[3] It is interesting to note that public educators early recognized the cohesive function of the English language.[4] While several missionary attempts were made to transliterate native dialects into the Latin alphabet,[1] in the public schools it was provided that "children shall be taught in the English language, and the use of school books printed in any foreign language, will not be allowed."[2] The second part of this statement probably referred to the use of the Russian language among the Aleuts and southern Eskimos.

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[1] *Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1886-87*, p. 100.

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] *Ibid*.

[4] Native languages and dialects differ greatly, not only among the three distinct native groups but also within each group. These languages have no written form. (H. Dewey Anderson and Walter C. Eells, *Alaska Natives: A Survey of Their Sociological and Educational Status* [Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1935], p. 189.)

The development of native leadership was to be accomplished primarily through vocational, or as it was then called "industrial", education. In those areas along the Southern coasts of Alaska where prolonged contact with white settlers had already affected the native culture, leadership was to be developed principally by means of boarding schools. Pupils were to be selected on the basis of intelligence and would be sent to those schools at Sitka and Wrangell to be educated primarily in such trades as carpentry, boatbuilding, mechanics, fish canning, and domestic science.[3] After completing their education, these natives would return to their villages to provide leadership in the period of transition between native and white culture.

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[1] Some churches, notably the Roman Catholic, maintain a policy of encouraging church workers to speak the language of the particular group to which they are assigned.

[2] *Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1886-87*, p. 100.

[3] *Governor's Report, 1887, p. 30*; *Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1887-88*, pp. 186-87, 193; *Ibid.*, *1896-97*, I, xxxviii.

Advanced academic training was not a primary purpose of the early boarding schools in Alaska. However, several Alaskan native students were sent to schools in the United States, and a few of them returned to teach in Alaska.[1]

In the Arctic and Western regions of Alaska which were not as advanced as the Southern coast as far as contact with the white culture was concerned, native leadership was to be fostered through the introduction from Siberia of domestic reindeer herds. The first reindeer were brought into Alaska by Sheldon Jackson in 1892, and small herds were soon established throughout the Northern regions.[2] The introduction of reindeer to Alaska was not only to provide meat and clothing for the Eskimos. More important, it was to act as a civilizing influence, enabling the natives to "take the long step from nomadic fishermen and hunters to dwellers in villages, with permanent employments that will support them . . ."[3] However, the reindeer herds were not to be entrusted to the average native but were to be used as instruments for the development of leadership in "trustworthy natives — those ambitious to learn the civilization of the white men."[4] A program of apprenticeship in herding was set up, and after a certain period of time the apprentice herders were to be given their own reindeer as a reward "for intelligent and persevering industry . . .[and] to gradually develop the sense of individual ownership of property -- a sense which has never been developed in the tribal relation."[1]

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[1] *Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1889-90*, II, 1256.

[2] *Ibid., 1896-97*, I, xxxviii.

[3] *Ibid*., xxxix.

[4] *Ibid*.

Reindeer herding continued to be a major industry in the tundra regions until the late 1930's. However, after around 1908,[2] the use of reindeer as a specific influence in the educational program was gradually abandoned.

We can see in this early program of native education a desire to sublimate the native culture to that of the dominant white culture. This was to be done not by physically integrating the native and white populations but by introducing the white culture into the villages where the natives would remain. The majority was to receive a rather limited introduction by means of the English language. However, a select minority was to be educated in vocational schools in the more civilized areas and by reindeer apprenticeship in primitive regions and was then to return to the villages to influence their neighbors.

The inadequacy of the limited type of education provided in the villages was soon recognized, and steps were taken later to expand this program. However, the boarding-school idea of training for leadership through "creaming off" the best elements of native society, training them primarily in vocational areas (although later advanced academic education was also provided), and then sending them back to the villages continued until relatively recently to be the official policy of the Federal government in training for leadership.

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[1] Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1896-97, I, xxxix.

[2] Sheldon Jackson resigned as General Educational Agent in 1908. The use of reindeer as a means of educating the Eskimos was a pet scheme of Jackson's.

Establishment of a Dual System of Education

The Organic Act of 1884 had provided for the establishment of an educational system in which no distinction was to be made on the basis of race. However, the numerical composition of the population as well as the necessity for introducing "the native to the more beneficent effects of what would be the dominant culture"[1] caused the emphasis to be placed upon the education of the Alaskan natives. As a result of this emphasis, resentment soon developed among the white population who believed that integrated schools would provide an inferior type of education for their children.[2]

In towns such as Juneau and Sitka where the population was sufficient to warrant more than one school, segregated institutions were established.[1] In many of the smaller communities provisions for only one school were made. As the white population began to swell toward the end of the century as a result of the gold rush, increased agitation occurred for the establishment of a separate system of schools. In 1900 Congress passed an act providing for the establishment and local control of independent schools for white children within incorporated towns.[2] And in January, 1905, the Nelson Act was passed providing for the establishment of schools in areas outside incorporated towns for "white children and *children of mixed blood who lead a civilized life*."[3] These schools were to be under the jurisdiction of the governor of Alaska. They later provided the nucleus of a Territorial system of schools when in 1917 a Territorial Department of Education was established with jurisdiction over all schools not under the control of the Bureau of Education.[4]

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[1] Gruening, *The State of Alaska*, p. 358.

[2] Jeannette P. Nichols, *Alaska, a History of Its Administration, Exploitation, and Industrial Development during Its First Half Century under the Rule of the United States* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1923), p. 103.

The Nelson Act of 1905 established two separate systems of education in Alaska which still exist at the present time. The Federal government became primarily responsible for the education of Alaskan natives, while schools for the white population came to be under Territorial control. However, the Nelson Act, providing educational opportunities for "children of mixed blood who lead a civilized life," also caused the Territorial government to become involved in the education of natives. As the years passed an ever-increasing per cent of Territorial schools was native in composition, and at the present time the Territory is responsible for the education of more natives than is the Bureau of Indian Affairs.[1]

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[1] *Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1887-88*, p. 185; *Ibid., 1888-89*, II, 755.

[2] *Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1918-1920*, p. 31.

[3] *U. S. Statutes at Large*, Vol. XXXIII, p. 619 (1905). Italics mine.

[4] *Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1918-1920*, p. 31.

Federal Schools in Alaska, 1905 to the Present

With the establishment of the dual school system in 1905 the full efforts of the Federal government were turned toward the problems facing the Alaskan natives. To discharge its duties more effectively the Bureau of Education was reorganized in 1906, a special Alaska division was established in Washington, and district superintendents were appointed in Alaska. As a result of a detailed report made by Harlan Updegraff, Chief of the Alaska Division, after a personal trip to Alaska in 1907, the Federal government began to expand its activities.[2]

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[1] Statistics Concerning Indian Education, Fiscal Year 1957 (U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Branch of Education), p. 6.

[2] Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1907, I, 15.

The avowed policy of the government continued to be the acculturation of the natives and the development of self-reliance and citizenship. This policy was predicated on the idea that the process would occur in the villages where the natives would continue to live. However, it was recognized that a narrow program of education, such as was officially put forth in 1887, was inadequate to accomplish the objectives because of the physical, social, and economic demoralization of the natives. In his report, Updegraff listed as forces which must be removed in order to ameliorate the condition of the natives:

(a) The selling and giving of liquor to natives by white men.
(b) Illicit intercourse between white men and native women.
(c) Destruction of fish and game.
(d) The ravages of disease.
(e) Disregard of the rights of the natives.[1]

During the next four decades the federal government undertook a vast paternalistic social program to improve the condition of the native peoples in Alaska. Hospitals were built and medical supplies sent to village teachers, a program of social welfare was initiated, and funds for the relief of destitution were appropriated. Economic assistance was provided through the encouragement of native industries and the establishment of native cooperative stores.

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[1] *Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1907*, I, 384.

Although at times educational funds were cut in order to provide for medical emergencies,[1] the village school was considered to be the focal point for the entire Federal program of social improvement. In his official recommendations, Updegraff stated, "It is not necessary that different agencies and institutions be constituted for the carrying out of . . . [these various] sources of action. The school or the hospital . . . may serve as agencies for carrying on the work in all the different directions named."[2] The teacher came to be considered as a social worker whose duties, according to official reports, included not only teaching but also those of a physician, nurse, postmaster, business manager, community builder, and general village advisor.[3] It was his task "to elevate the native races intellectually, morally, and physically."[4] Needless to say, with so many areas of service in which to perform, the ability to teach was considered as less important than "the qualifications of self-denial and philanthropy."[5]

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[1] *Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1914*, I, 634.

[2] *Ibid., 1907*, I, 385.

[3] *Biennial Survey of Education, 1920-22*, U. S. Bureau of Education, Bulletin 1924, No. 13 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1924), I, 765; *Governor's Report, 1936*, p. 36.

[4] *Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1910*, II, 1343.

[5] *Biennial Survey of Education, 1920-22*, I, 765.

To meet the increased demands upon the school as a community center with the purpose of promoting the physical, moral, and industrial welfare of the natives, adult as well as child, the educational program was expanded to include much more than the teaching of English. While proficiency in the tool subjects was emphasized, the curriculum also included instruction in sanitation and personal hygiene. Vocational education ceased to be thought of merely in terms of the development of native leadership but was expanded to include in the local village school instruction in manual arts and domestic science as well as in regional industries designed to increase the self-sufficiency of the native population.[1]

Despite the increased emphasis upon a broad program of education and social service for the overall native population, the key to the government's program of acculturating the Alaskan natives lay in the special education of the most intellectually advanced youth. In spite of many criticisms,[2] the Bureau of Education continued its policy of "creaming off" the brightest boys and girls, sending them to boarding schools for a basically vocational education, and then returning them to their villages where they were expected, by teaching and example, to render service to their neighbors.[1]

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[1] *Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1913*, I, 633; *Ibid., 1906*, I, 245. In Southeastern Alaska, where the natives had become more acculturated, the government supply ship, the "U. S. S. Boxer," was used for several years as a "floating school." It was anchored at each village for several weeks for the purpose of teaching navigation, engineering, mechanical arts, and radio telegraphy to the native boys. (*Governor's Report, 1923*, p. 46; *Ibid., 1925*, p. 65.)

[2] *Ibid., 1917*, pp. 19-20; Alfred H. Brooks, *Blazing Alaska's Trails*, ed. Burton L. Fryxell (College, Alaska: University of Alaska and the Arctic Institute of North America, 1953), p. 484.

Since boarding school facilities were extremely limited in Alaska, most students were sent to Indian schools in the United States.[2] However, the deleterious effects of sending children to schools so far away, including health hazards and sociological maladjustments, soon became evident, and in the 1920's the Federal government initiated a program of establishing vocational boarding schools in various sections of Alaska. Schools were opened in Eklutna, near Anchorage; at Kanakanak, on Bristol Bay; and at White Mountain, on the Seward Peninsula.[3] Mount Edgecumbe School at Sitka was opened in 1947, using the buildings of the decommissioned naval air base.[4]

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[1] *Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1907*, I, 385-86.

[2] *Biennial Survey of Education, 1924-26*, U. S. Bureau of Education, Bulletin 1928, No. 25 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1928), p. 500. The industrial school at Sitka, an early mission contract school, had become a private denominational institution, leaving Wrangell Institute as the only government boarding school until around 1923.

[3] *Ibid*., pp. 500-501.

[4] *Governor's Report, 1948*, p. 58.

Although during the 1930's and early 1940's the general objectives of education remained much the same as they had during the previous two decades, the Federal government began to reevaluate its policy of acculturation. Probably as the result of the administrative transfers of jurisdiction over Alaskan native affairs from the Office of Education to the Office of Indian Affairs within the Department of the Interior,[1] the objectives of native education in Alaska came more directly in line with the overall objectives of Indian education in the United States. During this time there seemed to be a fear on the part of government authorities that in the process of taking on more and more of the white civilization, the Alaskan natives were in danger of losing their distinctly native culture. As a result, during this period the government took several steps to reassert the native culture, including an unsuccessful attempt (sponsored personally by the Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes) to establish native reserves[2] and a somewhat more successful effort to stimulate interest in, and provide a ready market for, native arts and crafts.[3] The collection and publication of native legends[4] was fostered as well as a dictionary of the Aleut language. The curriculum of Federal schools also included specific suggestions as to the use of materials from native sources such as local stories and legends.[2]

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[1] *Governor's Report, 1931*, p. 96.

[2] Gruening, *The State of Alaska*, pp. 364-71.

[3] *Governor's Report*, 1940, p. 46.

[4] For example, Edward L. Keithahn, *Igloo Tales* (Lawrence, Kansas: Haskell Institute, 1945).

The last decade has witnessed a basic change in the policy of the Federal government toward natives in Alaska as well as in the United States. Whereas previous programs of assistance had been based on the assumption that the native population would continue to live primarily in the native villages, the official policy of the Department of the Interior in recent years has been "'pointed toward discharging the Nation's obligation to the natives to assure that as individuals and groups they maintain national standards of health, education, and economic well-being. The rehabilitation of Alaska's natives and their *complete assimilation* into the culture and economy of Alaska is the goal of this policy and its related programs.'"[3]

This shift in philosophy has resulted in a comparable shift in the objectives of native education in Alaska. Although the educational program remains centered in the

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[1] Richard H. Geoghegan, *The Aleut Language*, ed. Fredericka I. Martin (Washington: U. S. Dept. of the Interior, 1944.)

[2] Charles F. Reid, *Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States*, Contributions to Education, No. 825 (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1941), p. 124.

[3] *Governor's Report, 1951*, pp. 3-4. Italics mine.

local communities and is based on local needs and resources, there has been a recognition on the part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Alaska of the need for an education which will not only insure the natives maximum independence in the local community but which will also take into consideration the vast economic and social changes occurring within the Territory, such as population shifts and increasing job opportunities. In recent years, therefore, the Federal government has been stressing in its program of studies a type of education which will prepare the Alaskan native to live anywhere in the Territory -- rather than merely in his own isolated village.[1]

There has also been a recognition of the need for more education for all natives than had been possible heretofore. The Bureau of Indian Affairs is endeavoring to provide an educational program through the eighth grade in all local communities. Increasingly, specialists in native education have come to the realization that a program of elementary education is insufficient to effect the overall policy of the government to assimilate the natives completely into the Alaskan economy and culture. The necessity for increasing the opportunities for secondary education has been seen. At the present time only one high school solely for natives exists in Alaska -- at Mount Edgecumbe. Therefore, the government is endeavoring to provide for local secondary education through the establishment of regional high schools. This plan, however, has not yet been put into operation.[1]

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[1] *Governor's Report, 1951*, p. 64. There has been an attempt on the part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs to bring the program of studies in native schools more in line with the curriculum of the Territory. (*Minutes of the Territorial Board of Education*, Eighth Regular Session, February 26 - March 8, 1945 [Juneau: Office of the Commissioner of Education], p. 13.)

Although in recent years the trend has been toward increased educational opportunities for the many, the emphasis on advanced education for intelligent natives is an important aspect of federal policy. However, the older idea of taking the leaders out of the villages, educating them, and then sending them back as leaders of their people -- in other words, of working through them to educate the majority -- has changed. The newer idea is to educate the intellectually advanced native for personal rather than group development so that he is prepared on the basis of his individual ability to take advantage of opportunities anywhere in society.

In addition to its basic function as a vocational school, Mount Edgecumbe is also a fully accredited academic high school preparing students for college entrance.[2] In 1934 the Bureau of Indian Affairs established a fund to assist in the advanced education of young native men and women.[1] The number of students assisted by this means has increased steadily, and additional support of the program was provided by the establishment on the part of the Territorial legislature of native scholarships to the University of Alaska.[2] In 1957-58, 157 native students were continuing their education beyond the high school level.[3]

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[1] Governor's Report, 1957, p. 101.

[2] Ibid., 1951, p. 64.

Territorial Schools in Alaska, 1905 to the Present

Since its inception, the Alaska Territorial school system, by the terms of the Nelson Act separating the two school systems, has been responsible for the education of a large number of natives. The years which followed saw the steady increase in the number of natives educated in Territorial schools. In 1920, 819 students in Territorial schools were native.[4] The latest statistics available indicate that there are 6,144 native students now enrolled in Territorial schools.[5]

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[1] Governor's Report, 1939, pp. 48-49.

[2] Ibid., 1957, p. 102.

[3] John I. Eichman (comp.), Horizons: Higher Education for Alaskan Natives, U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Branch of Education (Juneau: Juneau Area Office, 1958), p. 3.

[4] Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1918-1920, p. 57.

[5] Statistics Concerning Indian Education, Fiscal Year 1957 (U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Branch of Education), p. 6.

At the present time Territorial schools enrolling native students may be divided into two general classifications. They include schools in incorporated districts in which local boards of education are elected to control school affairs, although these schools are financed in large part by the Territory as well as by obtaining local support.[1] In addition, unincorporated schools are maintained by the Territorial Department of Education in rural areas throughout Alaska. These schools are financed and controlled directly by the Territorial Department of Education "under the Rules and Regulations of the Territorial Board of Education as though they comprised one large school district."[2] Most natives attending Territorial schools reside in unincorporated districts.

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, the Territorial government took the position that the welfare of the Alaskan natives was primarily a Federal, rather than a Territorial, responsibility. The basic reasons for this attitude were the financial inability of the Territory to make adequate provisions for both the native and the white population as well as the traditional responsibility of the Federal government toward Indian welfare in the United States.

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[1] Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1956, pp. 26-29.

[2] Ibid., p. 32.

Examples of the Territorial position are seen not only in the area of medical and economic relief for natives[1] but also in the field of education. The official attitude of the Territorial government was that it was not responsible for the education of natives but was rather "an unwilling contributor, but forced to take steps in this direction in the interest of the public welfare."[2] Territorial officials believed that the Federal government "should extend its excellent system of education to all full-blooded natives and those of mixed blood, as the drain on the Territorial treasury is very great."[3] However, if the Bureau of Indian Affairs were unable to establish schools for the entire native population, the Territory then believed that it should receive tuition payments for those natives attending its schools.[4] Since tuition payments were not forthcoming,[5] the Bureau of Indian Affairs offered to take over those Territorial schools which were predominantly native, and by 1939, 19 schools had been transferred from Territorial to Federal jurisdiction.[1]

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[1] *Governor's Report, 1920*, p. 62; *Ibid., 1924*, p. 5.

[2] *Ibid., 1920*, pp. 59-60.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 60.

[4] *Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1936*, pp. 30-31.

[5] Federal officials explained that tuition could be paid only on non-taxpaying natives and that Alaskan natives were not exempted from paying taxes by Territorial law.

Despite the fact that the great majority of students attending rural Territorial schools was native, little consideration, or even mention, of the problems of native education can be found in the official educational statements of the Territory. In the report of only one Commissioner of Education was recognition given to the fact that the rural schools of the Territory were not doing the work for which they were established and that the curriculum was not adapted to the needs of the people for whom this education was designed.[2] The curriculum during this period was designed primarily for the white population. Specific standards were established which were unrealistic in terms of the background, needs, and outlook of the native groups. While lip service was paid to modern educational concepts, and the Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education (to which were added the principles of Leadership-followership and World-mindedness) were set forth as the basic objectives of education in Alaska,[3] the Territorial curriculum offered little room for flexibility. The objectives of education in rural schools were the same as for city schools, and in

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[1] *Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1938*, p. 35; *Ibid., 1940*, p. 44.

[2] *Ibid., 1932*, pp. 32-34.

[3] *Ibid., 1926*, p. 9; *Course of Study for Elementary Schools of Alaska*, Territory of Alaska (Juneau: Department of Education, 1941), p. 13.

1942 the Commissioner of Education described the elementary program in the rural schools as virtually the same as that found in the smaller city systems.[1] In 1939, an elementary school program of study, prepared by a professor of education at the University of Alaska, was adopted and sent to all Territorial schools.[2]

An independent study of the Territorial school system, published in 1941, revealed an outdated curriculum in which a traditional organization of subject matter prevailed, the college preparatory aim dominated the secondary schools, and specific problems relating to the Alaskan environment were neglected. In summary, it stated that "this academic type of curriculum is especially ill-suited to the needs of the native children, who constitute a large majority in the rural schools."[3]

Within the last decade there has been a change in attitude toward the natives on the part of the Territory and an increased recognition of the place of the native in the Alaskan social structure. This recognition is reflected in the changed wording of the description of Territorial schools in the Governors' reports. As late as 1930 the schools were described as maintained "for white children and children of mixed blood leading a civilized life."[1] By 1932 the wording had been changed to "white and mixed-blood children."[2] Since 1950 the school system has been described merely as including "schools within incorporated cities and districts, and rural schools outside incorporated cities and districts."[3] No specific mention is made of race.

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[1] Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1942, pp. 30-31.

[2] Ibid., 1940, p. 32. This program of study was written by James C. Ryan who became Commissioner of Education in 1941.

[3] Reid, Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States, p. 140.

As the policy of integrating the native population into the Alaskan society emerged, the curricula of the Territory and the Bureau of Indian Affairs tended to become more similar.[4] However, there has been an increased tendency on the part of the Territorial Department of Education to develop a single program of study for all Territorial schools.

This curricular uniformity was justified on the grounds that "the necessity for making major adjustments in the curriculum to provide for purely local needs is not as great now as it once was . . . . Too often curriculum adjustments to meet local needs represent the demands of local pressure groups or the desire of a teacher to express his own philosophy of education."[1] The increasing tendency toward Territorial, rather than local, control of education is reflected in a statement of the present Commissioner of Education:

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[1] *Governor's Report, 1930*, p. 78.

[2] *Ibid., 1932*, p. 87.

[3] *Ibid., 1950*, p. 23.

[4] *Minutes of the Territorial Board of Education*, Eighth Regular Session, February 26 - March 8, 1945, p. 13; Homer H. Howard, *In Step with the States: A Comparison of State and Indian Service Educational Objectives and Methods*, U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Educational Division (Lawrence, Kansas: Haskell Institute, 1949), p. 113.

> The schools operated by the Department of Education during the biennium had a uniform course of study, used the same series of textbooks in so far as possible, and received the same sort of supervision and consideration. They may well be considered as a part of the most diverse and far-flung school district in the whole United States.[2]

The Territorial curriculum is still designed primarily for white children. While the Federal government may have gone too far in its emphasis on specifically "native" problems in its educational program, there cannot be found in the Territorial course of study any recognition of special native needs or an understanding of the different patterns of thought to be found in the native culture.[1]

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[1] Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1948, p. 30. This policy was developed during the decade between 1940 and 1950, a period when James C. Ryan was Commissioner of Education (1941 to 1951). In a recent educational meeting Ryan reiterated "his previously expressed belief in a high degree of control on all phases of the school program, and particularly the course of study and curriculum, from the Territorial level." (Minutes of the Territorial Board of Education, Fifteenth Regular Session, March 27 - March 30, 1956, p. 8).

[2] Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1954, p. 26.

Movement toward a Unified System of Education

Governmental policy concerning the unification of school systems in Alaska has undergone change during the last fifty years. The establishment of a dual system of schools in 1905 was based upon the premise that different types of education were needed for the white and native population. As a result, in many communities where there was a mixed population, such as Juneau, Sitka, Nome, Fort Yukon, and Eagle, both the Territorial and Federal governments maintained schools. In localities where schools were provided by only one of the two agencies, students normally under the jurisdiction of the other school system were admitted.[2] But for twenty-five years following the establishment of the dual system of education, the idea of unification was not considered. The principal objections raised by the Territory were the friction which would result between the two races,[3] "the irregularity of attendance of Natives, and their inability to conform to the standard of the whites in the matter of health and sanitation."[1]

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[1] An excellent discussion of the problem of education resulting from the differences in attitudes, concepts of living, and patterns of thought which are found in the native cultures can be found in the following publication: Eunice Logan (ed.), _Curriculum Planning for Cultural Adjustment_ (Juneau: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Branch of Education, Juneau Area Office, 1957), pp. 1-4.

[2] _Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1918-1920_, p. 54.

[3] _Ibid._, p. 54.

In the early 1930's there began to develop on the part of Territorial officials a recognition of the need for eventual unification of the two systems. But this recognition was tempered by the plea for increased federal appropriations for native education.[2]

The period since World War II has witnessed the development of a policy on the part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Alaska to eliminate gradually its educational function. This basic shift in policy has been caused by several important factors. It is in line with the announced desire of the Department of the Interior to decentralize Indian administration and to spread functions formerly held by the Bureau of Indian Affairs "to include many State and federal agencies not previously concerned, including State Departments of Public Welfare, State Departments of Public Instruction, the U. S. Department of Agriculture, the State courts, etc."[3] This policy was officially recognized in 1953 when the eighty-third Congress passed House Concurrent Resolution 108, "establishing formally a policy of gradual elimination of Federal trusteeship and of the special services provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs to Indians."[1]

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[1] Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1918-1920, p. 39.

[2] Governor's Report, 1931, p. 15.

[3] The United States Indian Service: A Sketch of the Development of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and of Indian Policy, U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (Washington: Interior Duplicating Section, No. 836), December, 1956), pp. 13-15.

It is based on a belief that native children are entitled to the same opportunities for public education as are provided for other citizens and on the recognition that these children will become better adjusted to living with all people in a community by association with children in public schools.[2]

It is based, in part, on population shifts which, particularly in the period under consideration, have brought an increasing number of natives into the larger population centers.[3]

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[1] The United States Indian Service: A Sketch of the Development of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and of Indian Policy, p. 16.

[2] Willard Beatty and others, Education for Cultural Change, U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (Chilocco, Oklahoma: Chilocco Indian Agricultural School, 1953), pp. 178-80.

[3] Careful population analyses to illustrate this trend are unavailable. However, increases in population of the larger villages are so great as to indicate migration from other villages, since these increases cannot be accounted for solely on the bases of increased birth and decreased mortality rates. For example, Bureau of Indian Affairs census statistics show that Point Barrow has grown from 451 in 1945 to a population of 1,274 in 1957. Hawkins also states that the population of Kotzebue shows an increase from 1950 to 1956 which "can be attributed to a gradual movement of the native people from some of the upriver villages to the bright lights of Kotzebue." (James E. Hawkins, The Kotzebue, Noatak-Kobuk Region: A Preliminary Economic Study [Juneau: Alaska Rural Development Board, December 1956], p. 7.)

Similar population concentration in the town of Dillingham is shown in a study of the Bristol Bay region. (George W. Rogers, "Preliminary Economic Survey of Dillingham, Alaska, and the Bristol Bay Region." [Juneau: Alaska Rural Development Board, August 1955], p. 4) (Mimeographed).

It is also based on the increased acceptance on the part of the white population of the Alaskan natives to the benefits of full citizenship as evidenced, for example, in the Territorial anti-discrimination law passed in 1945.[1]

It is based in part on the increased desire of the native people to take over more of the functions of citizenship and self-government as can be seen, for example, in sending representatives to the Territorial legislature[2] and in the formation of independent school districts in several native villages of Southeastern and Southwestern Alaska.[3]

It is based in part on the increased willingness of the Territory to take over from the Federal government functions which are traditionally considered to be under the jurisdiction of state governments.[4]

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[1] Governor's Report, 1945, p. 2. When asked in a recent interview if Alaskan natives are segregated, Governor Stepovich replied, "No. Most of them are in the territorial schools and get along fine. We have no problems there at all." (U. S. News and World Report, XLV [July 4, 1958], 42.)

[2] Gruening, The State of Alaska, pp. 376-77.

[3] Governor's Report, 1953, p. 69.

[4] During the 1930's the Territory urged the Federal government to undertake greater activity in aiding the natives. (Ibid., 1933, p. 35; Ibid., 1934, p. 38; Ibid., 1935, p. 37.) However, by the late 1940's, it was urging less paternalism and intervention on the part of the Federal government. Although the question of continued Federal support for native education in Alaska remains to be settled, the Territorial government has expressed willingness to unify the two existing school systems under Territorial jurisdiction. (Ibid., 1947, pp. 8-9; Ibid., 1951, pp. 3-4, 65.) In 1945 the Commissioner of Education testified in favor of partial unification of the two school systems at a hearing before the subcommittee of the Senate committee on Territories. (B. W. Denison, Alaska Today, [Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1949], p. 275.)

To initiate its new policy and as the result of decreased Congressional appropriations in the late 1940's, the Bureau of Indian Affairs discontinued the practice of maintaining Federal schools for natives in communities where Territorial schools were already established. Because of insufficient enrollment it also closed several schools in wholly native communities.[1] This action was immediately met with cries of consternation on the part of Territorial officials who, while recognizing the need for eventual amalgamation of the two school systems, decried the inadequate notice given by the Federal government.[2]

As a result of this situation, Territorial and Federal officials in Alaska began negotiations designed to develop a plan for the amalgamation of the two school systems.

As early as 1945 Commissioner of Education Ryan had put forth a plan for unification predicated upon nine basic principles which included the elimination of racial segregation, the legal responsibility of the Territory for the education of all its citizens, economic efficiency, and democratic school management. According to this plan, all Federal schools, with the exception of boarding schools, would be transferred to the Territory of Alaska, and Federal financial assistance would continue on a decreasing scale for a twenty-five year period. At the end of this period, all Federal assistance would cease. This plan, however, was not supported either by the Department of the Interior[1] or by the Territorial legislature.[2]

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[1] Governor's Report, 1947, pp. 8-9; Ibid., 1948, p. 59.

[2] Ibid., 1947, pp. 8-9.

In 1950, following negotiations between representatives of the Territorial Department of Education and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, an agreement was reached whereby a program of orderly transfer of Federal schools to the Territory under terms of the Johnson-O'Malley Act would be initiated.[3] By the terms of this Act, passed by Congress in 1934 authorizing the transfer of Federally appropriated funds to state and local agencies for services rendered, the Bureau of Indian Affairs agreed to provide funds for the operation of these schools. However, title to the physical property was to be held by the Federal government.[4] Five schools were to be transferred to the Territory on July 1, 1951, and provisions were made for the continuation of the program on a year-to-year basis until 1960, the contemplated date by which all Federal schools would have been transferred.[1] The initial five schools were transferred according to plan in 1951, and by 1953-54 a total of twenty-two schools had passed from Federal to Territorial operation.[2]

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[1] Minutes of the Territorial Board of Education, Twelfth Regular Session, February 12 - February 23, 1951, p. 11.

[2] Conversation with Dr. James C. Ryan, August 5, 1958. Ryan stated his continuing conviction as to the efficacy of this plan, particularly when viewed in terms of the present deadlock.

[3] Minutes of the Territorial Board of Education, Fourth Special Session, April 17 - April 21, 1950, pp. 10-11; Ibid., Twelfth Regular Session, February 12 - February 23, 1951, p. 13.

[4] Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1956, p. 33.

Problems arose between the Territory and the Bureau of Indian Affairs which threatened to halt the program. These problems centered around the lack of mutual agreement on a permanent plan for transfer, reluctance on the part of the Territory to accept additional schools because of the poor physical condition of some of the school plants as well as differences in standards between the two agencies, and the failure to provide a solution to meet some of the more serious community problems common to isolated native communities, such as health and communications. As a result, the transfer of "Johnson-O'Malley" schools has virtually ceased since 1954.[3]

In 1954 the Bureau of Indian Affairs presented a plan to the Territorial Board of Education for the permanent transfer of Federal schools in the Territory. This plan envisioned the continuation of temporary Federal assistance under terms of the Johnson-O'Malley Act, the transfer of responsibility for conducting all educational activities to the Territory and local districts as soon as they could assume these functions, and the transfer of title of all Bureau of Indian Affairs educational facilities to the Territory or local districts. Federal assistance would be continued for a five-year period in those communities containing large numbers of non-taxpaying natives which would create a financial burden on the Territory or local districts. Following the initial five-year period, full administrative, supervisory, and financial responsibility for providing a public school program in the schools of Alaska would be assumed by the Territory and local districts.[1]

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[1] Governor's Report, 1952, pp. 79-80.

[2] Ibid., 1955, p. 71.

[3] Ibid., 1954, pp. 78-79. A new Territorial school at Fort Yukon, built with Alaska Public Works and Territorial funds, was opened in September, 1957. Seventy-five per cent of the operational cost is being paid by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. (Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1952, p. 31; Governor's Report, 1957, p. 101.)

This plan was not acceptable to the Territorial Board of Education:

> primarily because it provides for a cut-off of financial support for these schools after a period of time, and further because the Board feels that any attempt to place the financial burden on the Territory for the operation of these schools at the present time or in the foreseeable future would constitute a financial burden which the Territory is not prepared to assume and should not be expected to assume.[2]

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[1] "Alaska Territorial Plan for Permanent Transfer of Federal Schools to the Territory of Alaska," (Juneau: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Alaska Native Service, October, 1953.) (Mimeographed).

[2] Minutes of the Territorial Board of Education, Fourteenth Regular Session, February 14 - February 25, 1955, pp. 52-53.

Negotiations between the Federal and Territorial agencies concerning permanent unification of the two school systems have continued, but at the present time no agreement has been reached. The official policy of the Bureau of Indian Affairs continues to be that as taxpaying citizens Alaskan natives are entitled to the same opportunities for public education as are provided for other citizens within the Territory. Therefore, it hopes to withdraw from educational activities in Alaska as quickly as practicable,[1] although it recognizes a moral obligation to assist the Territory in its efforts to assume responsibility for the education of all citizens of Alaska.[2]

On the other hand, the Territory believes that it cannot take on the added burden of the Federal schools in Alaska in the foreseeable future without substantial and continuing help from the Federal government and until problems which have arisen concerning the present schools administered by the Territorial Board of Education under the Johnson-O'Malley Act are settled.[1]

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[1] Statement by William Olsen, former Area Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau, Alaska, at a joint meeting of Bureau of Indian Affairs representatives with the Territorial Board of Education. Minutes of the Territorial Board of Education, Fifteenth Regular Session, March 27 - March 30, 1956, p. 21.

[2] Statement by Wayne Pratt, Assistant Chief, Education Branch, Bureau of Indian Affairs, at a joint meeting of Bureau of Indian Affairs representatives with the Territorial Board of Education. Ibid., Sixteenth Regular Session, February 6 - February 15, 1957, p. 68.

At present, then, the two separate school systems established in 1905 continue to operate in Alaska. Hurdles still remain in the path toward unification, notably the Territorial inability to finance a public school system for all citizens.[2] However, much progress toward this goal has been made in the last decade, and impending statehood for Alaska will doubtless see compromises made on the part of both the State and the Federal governments in order that a solution to this major problem can be found.

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[1] Minutes of the Territorial Board of Education, Sixteenth Regular Session, February 6 - February 15, 1957, pp. 72-74. These problems include: (1) Territorial demands for increased Federal funds for the construction and maintenance of buildings to which the Bureau of Indian Affairs continues to hold the titles; (2) differences in operating standards, including actual physical size of classrooms and teacher load (a second teacher is hired in Territorial schools when the enrollment reaches 20 to 25, depending on the number of grades, whereas in Bureau of Indian Affairs schools the enrollment must reach 42), which affect contract funds; (3) differences in standards for the opening and closing of schools (based on an enrollment of 12 to close a Bureau of Indian Affairs school and 8 to open a Special Territorial School) which has forced the Territory, in several instances, to assume responsibility for education in communities where Federal schools had been closed. (Ibid., Fourteenth Regular Session, February 14 - February 25, 1955, pp. 50-51; Ibid., Fifteenth Regular Session, March 27 - March 30, 1956, pp. 23-25.)

[2] At the present time the Territory is having difficulty in financing the schools already under its jurisdiction. It recently announced a ten per cent cut in Territorial portions of all school budgets because of the appropriation of insufficient funds. James C. Ryan, Superintendent of Schools in Fairbanks, has stated that this is the biggest across-the-board cut within his memory. (Fairbanks Daily News Miner, July 29, 1958.)

CHAPTER II

CURRICULUM AND EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES FOR NATIVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

World War II and the succeeding cold war have placed Alaska in an especially strategic position as far as our national defense is concerned. Military construction projects have boomed, and even the most remote regions have been penetrated by outsiders. Most native villages have undergone vast changes during this period. DEW (Distant Early Warning) Line construction, White Alice projects, airbase construction, and the exploration for mineral resources such as that which took place in the Point Barrow region have brought non-native influences into the lives of all but a few native families. While the plea is still heard that the natives should be left in peace and not be swept up by our Western civilization, the general philosophy of both the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Territorial Department of Education tends toward facilitation of integration into the dominant culture and preparation through education for as easy a period of transition as is possible.

The Curriculum of Territorial Elementary Schools

The Territorial Department of Education expresses this philosophy in terms of a standard curriculum for all elementary and high schools under its jurisdiction. An elementary school course of study supplement listing specific subjects to be taught has been issued for use with the regular course of study. These subjects include: language arts, arithmetic, social studies, science, health, safety, physical education, art, and music. Achievement goals are listed for each subject at each grade level, and an approximate weekly time allowance is given. At the fourth grade level, for example, it is suggested that two hundred fifty minutes be allowed per week for arithmetic. Considering achievements, the following minimum goals are listed:

> The child should:
> know fractions and whole numbers as a system.
> experience 8 place numbers and Roman numerals to XXX.
> add and subtract with carrying and borrowing twice and zeros.
> multiply with one place multiplier, 4 place product and checking.
> divide using long form, one place divider, remainders, zeros, checking.
> have money experiences in all four processes on interest level.
> extend fractional and mensuration concepts.
> solve one step problems on grade level.[1]

Flexibility at the local school level is encouraged, and there is the rralization that children learn at different rates and will not all achieve the same goals. Nevertheless, the stated belief of the Territorial Department of Education is that basic minimum learnings are needed by all children and that a certain uniformity is necessary to provide for students who transfer from one school to another. And particularly, an equality of educational opportunity for all students regardless of race or background is provided. Ryan, former Alaska Commissioner of Education, has expressed the belief that there should be no difference in the education provided for native children and that offered to other children in the Territory.[1] Racially segregated education either by school organization or by objectives is not in keeping with the philosophy of education expressed by the Territorial Department of Education. The avowed policy of this agency is that children are more alike than different and that racial characteristics should not be the determinants of the type of education which a child receives.

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[1] "Elementary Course of Study Supplement," Territory of Alaska (Revised; Juneau: Department of Education, 1954). (A chart.)

The philosophy of equality of educational opportunity for all children regardless of race is commendable and certainly justifiable. However, equality of education cannot be construed to mean uniformity of education designed to fit all children in Alaska without regard for differences in background or culture. There is no basis for the belief that the native people of Alaska are inferior to the non-native population in mental abilities or aptitudes. Defensible studies have never shown noticeable differences of intellectual abilities based on race. However, bilingualism, low standards of living, and restricted environments have created a considerable gap in achievement between the average student in a native community and the average child from a white, middle-class home. Cronbach states, "Impoverished environments handicap pupils . . . . The effect of restricted environment becomes worse the longer the person remains within it."[1]

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[1] Conversation with James C. Ryan, Superintendent of Schools, Fairbanks, August 5, 1958.

In light of these facts,[2] too little provisions appear to have been made for adaptability in the Territorial curriculum guide. For example, the suggested time allotments listed in the curriculum guide, when added together, constitute the entire school day. While it is stated in the guide that the objectives listed are minimum requirements, the time allowances, if followed, do not provide time for additional enrichment. Also, by suggesting the portion of the school day which should be given to each subject, account is not taken of the fact that in isolated schools there may be indisputable justification for initially stressing language or verbal skills which are requisite for other learning activities. A danger exists, therefore, that the guide be taken too literally and set a uniform pattern which is followed in all schools. There is need for greater flexibility and for provisions for more initiative in curriculum adaptation at the local level than now exists.

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[1] Lee J. Cronbach, Educational Psychology (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1954), pp. 212-13.

[2] Evidence of the extent of the gap in achievement test scores in native schools in comparison with national norms will be described in some detail in a later section of this chapter.

The lack of recognition that special educational problems exist in culturally atypical schools has resulted in the fact that teachers in these schools are not given any orientation for the special tasks with which they are faced. Little attention is given to the development or utilization of materials adapted to native schools. And unattainable standards are imposed upon many students from backward areas.

A promising example of what has been done in a somewhat similar situation can be found in Arizona where the Mexican population constitutes approximately one-fourth of the state residents. The Arizona Department of Education has issued a special course of study dealing with the instruction of bilingual children. A description of the problem is presented, and special techniques are suggested, specifically in language arts, reading, and social studies.[1] This approach is not intended to present a second class education or "something less than the best" for a minority group. But for the optimum instruction to occur, a complete understanding of the nature of the learner and the problems faced by him is essential.

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[1] Vera A. Chase, Instruction of Bilingual Children, Course of Study for Elementary Schools of Arizona, Bulletin No. 13 (Phoenix: State Department of Education, 1939).

The Curriculum of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Elementary Schools

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, in attempting to utilize general objectives of Indian education in Alaska, has found considerable local adaptation necessary. Nevertheless, like the Territorial Department of Education, the Bureau of Indian Affairs recognizes the fact that certain minimum goals are needed for all children. A guide has been prepared which attempts to itemize and describe these goals. In writing the introduction to this curriculum guide, Hildegard Thompson, Chief of the Branch of Education of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, stresses the need for flexibility to account for the special circumstances encountered in various regions and in particular schools. She states:

> Every effort has been made to present . . . a definite pattern, leaving much of the detailed filling out to the school or area curriculum committees. Many principals and teachers have agreed with the report, however, in requesting that the Central Office lay down certain minimum requirements which shall be uniform in all schools, while leaving to educational personnel in the local communities considerable latitude in building up enrichment material keyed to the local needs.[1]

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[1] Minimum Essential Goals for Indian Schools, Levels Five, and Six, U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (second edition; Lawrence, Kansas: Haskell Press, 1953), p. 3.

It is true that both agencies in Alaska have expressed the need for a common body of knowledge and common skills to be learned by all children. However, specific goals submitted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs differ in several respects from those suggested by the Territorial Department of Education. The objectives of the Bureau of Indian Affairs schools have retained a definitely social, a more immediately functional, and perhaps a "civilizing" flavor which is not considered in detail by the Territorial Department of Education. For example, in one section of the Bureau of Indian Affairs curriculum guide for levels five and six, under the general category of "Social and Civic Responsibilities," such specific goals are listed as, "Knows how to take a bath when running water is not available" and "Can assist matron in treating children with head lice."[1] However, the inference should not be made from these examples that the academic skills are ignored. In arithmetic, for example, such specifics as, "Divides one to four-place numbers with carrying and with a remainder" and "Reads legends on a map to determine distances, estimates distances on maps and checks for accuracy" are listed as achievement goals.[2]

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, because of its experiences in establishing and operating schools exclusively for native groups, has taken greater account of the special problems and handicaps faced by native students than has the Territorial Department of Education. Periodic orientations and in-service workshops are held in which questions pertaining to native education are considered. Attempts have been made to develop instructional materials presenting concepts and vocabulary in keeping with the experiences of the Alaskan native children.[1] In addition, guides such as Curriculum Planning for Cultural Adjustment[2] have been developed and distributed from the central office to help acquaint teachers with the special problems encountered in native schools.

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[1] Minimum Essential Goals for Indian Schools, Levels Five and Six, p. 16.

[2] Ibid., p. 38.

Instructional Materials for Native Elementary Schools

With the exception of a few materials which have been developed in Bureau of Indian Affairs in-service workshops and such isolated examples of textbook construction as the social studies book on Alaska[3] recently adopted by the Territorial Textbook Commission, the materials used in the schools operated by both agencies in Alaska are the same as those used throughout the United States. The Bureau of Indian Affairs has made available for order numerous books written about Alaska and the Arctic regions. In addition, newer texts presenting material of high interest level but with a controlled and simplified vocabulary have been used with enthusiastic response in a number of native schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.[1]

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[1] A series of readers with an Alaskan village setting was written by a group of in-service teachers at Brigham City, Utah, in 1953 and includes six booklets designed for beginners through grade five. This series was published by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1954.

[2] Eunice Logan (ed.), Curriculum Planning for Cultural Adjustment (Juneau: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Branch of Education, Juneau Area Office, 1957).

[3] Leah J. Peterson, This is Alaska, ed. Alice H. Hayden (Seattle: Cascade Pacific Books, 1958).

Because of the relatively small number of children involved, serious obstacles to the preparation of special instructional materials are apparent. The cost of publishing books in small quantities is prohibitive. In addition, materials which would present familiar concepts to Eskimos on the Arctic coast might not be appropriate for Indians in Southeastern Alaska. The argument is also used that children in rural areas should obtain information about life outside their restricted environments rather than learning about activities and objects which are already familiar to them. However, there is no question but that these concepts should be presented only after certain basic language and reading skills have been developed.

Objectives of Education for Native Elementary Schools

Implicit in the foregoing discussion are the questions of whether the objectives of education for native schools should differ from those put forth for non-native students and the extent (if any) to which the curriculum must be changed to accommodate both groups. There is general recognition of the fact that objectives of education for Alaskan natives must be formulated in light of a rapidly changing society in which "preparation for life in a native village" will no longer suffice. With a gradual merging of school systems in which both groups will be accommodated as the ultimate goal, a sincere effort must be made to bring the native schools in Alaska more in line with the schools for non-natives rather than slanting the curriculum toward a unique and special education for native students which will tend to perpetuate, and even enlarge, the schism between natives and non-natives in Alaska. However, it must be realized that this ultimate objective cannot be achieved overnight -- probably not even in a generation. Care must be taken during this period of transition to prevent the imposition of unrealistic expectations and unfair comparisons of the achievements of students from restricted environments with those of other pupils from more favorable circumstances with national norms, and with average grade standards.

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[1] Emmet A. Betts (ed.), The American Adventure Series (New York: Franklin Watts, Inc.), listed in "Annual Survey and Requisition Report," U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (Juneau: Branch of Education, Juneau Area Office, 1958), pp. 39-40. (Mimeographed).

With the eradication of special education as an ultimate goal, however, it should be emphasized that efforts must be directed toward this eventual unification. Too frequently, the fact that native students, because of limited background and unfamiliarity with verbal and abstract concepts, often do poorly in academic tasks causes teachers to avoid assignments and work calling for these skills. Without question, such practices compound the problem and enlarge even further the gap between native and non-native achievement.

Interviews conducted with native leaders in many instances reflected a deep resentment toward having been relegated to certain tasks which were familiar but unstimulating. One leader told of a schoolmate who still becomes upset when he recalls having been forced to carve totem poles in school despite his resistance and his sincere desire for other types of learning.

In discussing corrective measures which the school can take for children with restricted environmental background, Cronbach suggests that:

> the school should provide tasks within the present reach of the pupils but which increase readiness for the regular curriculum.
>
> Remedial instruction is profitable whenever a specific handicap from inadequate past experience is identified. If something can be done to repair this lack, the pupil may be able to overtake others who seemed to have much greater readiness.[1]

The solution, then, seems to lie in familiarity with overall conditions in native schools supplemented by careful analysis of specific community problems on the part of regional supervisors and teachers. Curriculum adaptations must then be made to account for the varying circumstances encountered in the individual villages. Certainly a pre-cut curriculum with unrealistic and rigid guidelines will not suffice. Instruction in the early grades should be based primarily upon the experiences and backgrounds of the learners. Materials and techniques which will take into account the restricted background and language difficulties of the pupils are needed urgently. However, there should be a reaffirmation of the belief that the differences in native and non-native curricula should be narrowed until eventually they merge. Present weaknesses on the part of native students in verbal and abstract skills is not sufficient ground for relegating these pupils to a curriculum devoid of these experiences. Rather there must be a united effort on the part of the instructional staff to develop a background and provide stimulation for the development of these skills.

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[1] Cronbach, Educational Psychology, p. 214.

Evidence of the policy of the Bureau of Indian Affairs for bringing Indian education closer to the philosophy and practices found in the public schools is shown in various publications. Howard has made a detailed comparison of methods and objectives of government Indian schools with the public schools in states where the BIA also operates schools. He considers Alaska in this comparison and concludes:

> The differences between the philosophy and procedures of territorial school education and those of federal schools for the natives of Alaska are fewer than is generally believed to be the case. The differences which do exist are differences in degree rather than kind.[1]

Testing Program in Native Elementary Schools

In keeping with the trend toward abolishing a specific and unique educational program for a special racial and cultural group, a testing program in Alaska has been established whereby standardized tests are administered regularly in all schools. Comparison can be made of achievement among schools and between native schools and national norms. Prior to 1956, no systematic testing program was in operation in Territorial schools; however, limited testing had been carried out by individual teachers on a local school basis. In 1956 a testing supervisor was employed, and Stanford Achievement Tests were given during the 1955-56 school year and tabulated for all elementary schools operated by the Territorial Department of Education.[2] Upon the recommendation of the testing supervisor, the SRA Tests and services were used during the school years 1956-57 and 1957-58.[1] While the testing program conducted by the Territorial Department of Education encompassed native and non-native schools in unincorporated districts, it was possible to isolate and tabulate scores for native schools for the purposes of this study.

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[1] Homer H. Howard, In Step with the States: A Comparison of State and Indian Service Educational Objectives and Methods, U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Educational Division (Lawrence, Kansas: Haskell Institute, 1949), p. 113.

[2] "A Report of the Testing Program, 1956-57," (Juneau: Office of the Commissioner of Education, August, 1957), p. 1. (Mimeographed).

Like the Territorial Department of Education, the Bureau of Indian Affairs has used standardized tests from year to year. However, whether or not tests were given depended largely upon the individual teacher, area supervisor, or educational specialist. During the 1957-58 school year the Bureau of Indian Affairs instigated a Territory-wide testing program in which *Stanford Achievement Tests* (Form J) were administered in most day schools. Results were sent to the University of Alaska where tabulations and interpretations were made in conjunction with the present study of native education. Individual tests for the Fairbanks district were scored at the University of Alaska. Scores were not received for all schools, and incomplete data were received from others. Schools not submitting complete information were excluded from the final tabulations.

Consideration was given to the possibility that tests being administered and scored by individual teachers might tend to be unreliable because of variations in testing procedures. As a method of determining the reliability of the test scores, the Executive Director and two assistants administered and scored Stanford Achievement Tests (Forms J, L, M, and N) in the following communities: Barrow, Bethel, Copper Center, Kenny Lake, Kotzebue, Nome, Northway, and Tanacross. All grades were not tested in every instance; however, an approximate total of 500 tests was administered in these eight communities. In schools where the Stanford Tests had been used previously, equivalent, but different, forms of the tests were employed. For purposes of correlation, the most recent test scores were obtained from the school records for those students who were examined by outside testers, and correlations of the results were made. As a means of checking the reliability of the school testing program, an approximate statistical measure was believed to be sufficient; therefore, the rho formula of rank correlation was used.[1]

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[1] "A Report of the Testing Program, 1956-57, " pp. 4-5.

High correlations were found in all instances between the scores of tests administered by school personnel and those administered by impartial testers. The correlations by individual villages are:

Barrow	.88
Bethel	.96
Copper Center . .	.93

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[1] The rho formula (rho $= 1 - \frac{6 D^2}{N(N^2-1)}$) and its application are described in C. C. Ross, Measurement in Today's Schools, Rev. Julian C. Stanley (third edition; Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1954), pp. 95-97.

Kenny Lake	.95
Kotzebue	.95
Nome	.84
Northway	.93
Tanacross	.89

The correlations tend to indicate a high degree of reliability of scores for tests administered by teachers in the individual schools. Therefore, the test results which have been tabulated and interpreted can be used with some confidence.

Inappropriateness of Standardized Tests for Native Schools

While in general, there appears to be justification for attempting to compare scores in native schools in Alaska with national norms and with those of other school many reservations are held as to the validity of these instruments, and caution must be used in the interpreta of results, when tests are used in native schools.

Standardized American tests assume a common backg based on life in the American culture. In fact, some cr ics argue that the typical test is based upon an urban, m dle-class, American culture in which verbal content, empha on competition, and speed are all factors influencing the results.[1]

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[1] Robert L. Thorndike and Elizabeth Hagen, Measurement and Evaluation in Psychology and Education (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1955), p. 221.

As well as expectation of a common cultural background on the part of the students being tested, there are, in addition, regionally or geographically loaded questions which inevitably influence the total scores. For example, an analysis of the tests brought out such inappropriate items for parts of Alaska as:

The ocean is __________
American water ice strong[1]

Teams usually play football in the __________
spring fall house snow[2]

Stars shine at __________
picnics recess night parades[3]

Which one is most necessary for human life? ______
fish automobiles cows plants[4]

In all of the examples cited, answers different from those considered correct by the test-makers can be given which are correct in terms of the Alaskan student's own background and experiences. Many other items of this sort occur in the different forms of the examinations.

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[1] Stanford Achievement Test, Primary Battery, Form M (Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y.: World Book Co., 1955), p. 5.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Stanford Achievement Test, Primary Battery, Form N (Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y.: World Book Co., 1956), p. 5.

[4] Stanford Achievement Test, Intermediate Battery, Form M (Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y.: World Book Co., 1956), p. 21.

All of the examples listed above were taken from the Stanford Achievement Tests. It was noted that the Stanford Tests contained many more items considered inappropriate for Alaskan natives than did the SRA Tests employed by the Territorial Department of Education. Evidence of the effects of the unsuitability of test items may be seen in the comparison of SRA and Stanford Test scores made by the testing supervisor from the Territorial Department of Education in his annual report. The Stanford Tests were given in March, 1956. The SRA TESTS were administered in November, 1956. Variations from the national norm on each test were compared. In general, the conclusion was that the SRA Tests were more difficult than the Stanford Tests by an approximate deviation from the norms of three months when results were compared for all territorial schools -- native and non-native.[1] However, when scores were tabulated on a regional basis, students in those systems with predominantly native enrollments did not receive noticeably higher scores on the Stanford Tests than on the SRA. It appears, therefore,that the more noticeable culture loading of the Stanford Tests tends to handicap native students to a greater extent than non-native students and causes test scores to be more alike when compared with schools having native enrollments.[2]

Another important factor which tends to invalidate standardized tests for use in native communities is the verbal proficiency required to comprehend and answer the questions satisfactorily. The levels of proficiency in English among native students vary considerably from village to village and from region to region. However, a general verbal handicap was noted in all areas.

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[1] "A Report of the Testing Program, 1956-57," p. 10.

[2] *Ibid.*, Table 5. Tabulations were made for fourth, fifth, and sixth grades.

The many factors tending to invalidate standardized tests when used in native schools have caused the value of these instruments to be questioned. Certainly there is a serious danger of misinterpretation of test results which can cause irreparable damage to the instructional program of the schools. The fact that native students do face serious handicaps in taking these examinations and understandably fall considerably below national standards has led to the indefensible conclusion in some instances that these students are lacking in intelligence and therefore are hardly educable. An example of this danger can be found in the comprehensive and influential study conducted by Anderson and Eells twenty-five years ago. The mental ability of Eskimo children, according to this study, appears to be:

> distinctly and measurably inferior to that of white children in the United States . . . . There is marked evidence, however, that its measurement by the Stanford-Binet Scale is influenced considerably by the linguistic features of that Scale . . . . It may be estimated that the inherent ability of unselected Eskimo children may be represented by an average intelligence quotient of between 75 and 90, probably one between 80 and

hat their actual ability to do school work is somewhat lower.[1]

s no question, however, but that some uniform eeded which will give indications of the progknesses found in native schools. In addition, the language and environmental factors which handicap native students on standardized tests will also be a marked disadvantage in a school curriculum which is dependent upon abstract thinking and which relies on linguistic ability. Therefore, if considerable caution is used to prevent misinterpretation of test results, the instruments may serve as sufficiently accurate predictors of academic success to justify the time and expense required for the testing program.[2]

Geographical Differences in Test Results

Tests given by the Bureau of Indian Affairs are administered at the district level and include the Bethel, Fairbanks, and Nome districts. While the communities of Barrow, Barter Island, and Wainwright comprise a fourth district, test scores were available for Barrow only. Therefore, scores for the Barrow school were considered separately and were not included in district tabulations.

The Territorial Department of Education has devised geographical divisions for testing purposes. Two of the divisions labeled River System District and Aleutian-Southern Coastal District include without exception schools enrolling 50 per cent or more native students. These two districts include all but three of the unincorporated native schools. A number of incorporated native schools did not participate in the testing program. However, scores were obtained from four incorporated schools (Hydaburg, Kake, Klawock, and Nome) and were considered apart from the area classification.

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[1] H. Dewey Anderson and Walter C. Eells, Alaska Natives: A Survey of Their Sociological and Educational Status (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1935), p. 327.

[2] Conversation with Robert L. Thorndike and Elizabeth Hagen, Professors of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, March 28, 1957.

Dates on which tests were administered varied among the different districts. In addition, Stanford Achievement Tests were used by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, whereas SRA Tests were administered by the Territorial Department of Education. For consistency, SRA composite scores, which are mean scores of the test parts, were recalculated as medians to conform with Stanford Test medians. Because of the variations in dates of testing and the use of different test batteries, it was not possible to make composite tabulations for all native schools included in the testing program. Instead, medians were computed for the five separate districts into which schools have been divided by their operating agencies.

Tables 1 through 5 show the median scores for each of the five divisions as compared with the national grade equivalents. Generally speaking, in all grades above the second, battery medians fall below the national grade

TABLE 1

MEDIANS FOR ALEUTIAN AND SOUTHERN COASTAL DISTRICT SCHOOLS*
SRA TESTS ADMINISTERED OCTOBER, 1957

		Work Study Skills		Reading		Language Arts			Arithmetic			Language Perception			
Number Tested	Grade Placement	References	Charts	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Capitalization Punctuation	Grammatical Usage	Spelling	Reasoning	Concepts	Computation	Auditory Discrimination	Visual Discrimination	Sight Vocabulary	Battery Median
127	2.1			1.8	2.1	2.5	2.4		2.3	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.1
154	3.1			2.4	2.7	2.7	2.8		2.5	2.6	2.9				2.7
146	4.1			2.7	3.3	3.3	3.4		3.0	3.2	3.5				3.2
94	5.1			4.0	3.8	3.9	4.3		4.1	4.1	4.5				4.0
135	6.1	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.6	4.6	5.0	5.5	4.4	4.9	5.3				4.7
11[illegible]	7.1	5.6	6.3	5.8	6.1	6.2	6.8	6.8	6.2	6.3	5.5				6.1
103	8.1	6.1	7.1	6.0	6.6	7.3	7.4	7.7	6.5	6.8	7.1				6.9
871															

*Schools tested in the Aleutian and Southern Coastal District include:

Afognak
Aleknagik
Alitak
Belkofski
Chenega
Clark's Point
Dillingham
Egegik
Ekwok
Karluk
Larsen Bay
Levelock
Naknek
Newhalen
Nikolski
Nondalton
Old Harbor
Ouzinkie
Pedro Bay
Port Graham
Sand Point
South Naknek
Tatitlek
Tenakee
Tyonek
Unga

TABLE 2.

MEDIANS FOR BETHEL DISTRICT SCHOOLS* STANFORD TESTS ADMINISTERED APRIL, 1958

Number Tested	Grade Placement	Paragraph Meaning	Word Meaning	Spelling	Language	Arithmetic Reasoning	Arithmetic Computation	Social Studies	Science	Study Skills	Battery Median
77	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.0		1.5	1.8				1.8
87	2.8	2.3	2.3	2.8		2.0	2.2				2.4
67	3.8	2.7	2.7	3.7	1.5	2.7	3.1				3.0
74	4.8	3.5	3.3	4.9	3.7	3.7	4.2				3.7
61	5.8	4.3	4.2	5.8	4.6	4.4	5.0	4.6	4.2	4.6	4.6
59	6.8	4.5	4.2	5.8	4.6	4.4	5.0	4.8	4.9	5.8	4.9
30	7.8	5.5	4.8	7.6	6.6	6.3	6.7	5.2	5.5	6.6	6.2
30	8.8	6.2	5.5	7.9	6.6	6.9	7.2	5.5	6.4	6.6	6.4
485											

*Schools tested in the Bethel District include:

Akiak
Akiachak
Atka
Hooper Bay
Kipnuk
Kwethluk
Mekoryuk
Mountain Village
Napaskiak
Nunapitchuk
Pilot Station
Quinhagak
Shageluk
Sleetmute
Tuluksak

TABLE 3.

MEDIANS FOR FAIRBANKS DISTRICT SCHOOLS* STANFORD TESTS
ADMINISTERED FEBRUARY, 1958

Number Tested	Grade Placement	Paragraph Meaning	Word Meaning	Spelling	Language	Arithmetic Reasoning	Arithmetic Computation	Social Studies	Science	Study Skills	Battery Median
26	1.6	1.8	1.7	1.4	1.2	2.0					1.7
51	2.6	2.1	2.3	2.1	1.8	2.3					2.1
60	3.6	2.8	2.9	3.0	2.4	2.8	3.1				2.6
42	4.6	3.9	4.1	4.1	3.8	4.0	4.2				4.1
47	5.6	4.7	4.2	5.2	3.7	4.6	5.1	4.7	4.1	4.7	4.7
21	6.6	5.1	4.2	4.8	4.0	5.2	6.0	4.9	4.7	5.2	4.9
8	7.6	5.9	5.8	6.2	6.2	6.9	6.3	4.9	5.0	5.4	5.9
17	8.6	7.6	6.4	8.4	7.4	7.7	7.8	6.4	6.6	6.8	6.6
272											

*Schools tested in the Fairbanks District include:

Arctic Village
Beaver
Circle
Eagle
Galena
Kaltag
Klukwan
Minto
Northway
Tanana
Tanacross
Venetie

TABLE 4.

MEDIANS FOR NOME DISTRICT SCHOOLS* STANFORD TESTS ADMINISTERED JANUARY, 1958

Number Tested	Grade Placement	Paragraph Meaning	Word Meaning	Spelling	Language	Arithmetic Reasoning	Arithmetic Computation	Social Studies	Science	Study Skills	Battery Median
69	1.4	1.7	1.6	1.5		1.4	1.4				1.5
181	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.3		1.8	2.0				2.0
104	3.4	2.7	2.7	3.4	2.4	2.8	2.8				2.9
162	4.4	3.1	3.1	4.0	3.0	3.3	3.5				3.2
170	5.4	3.8	3.9	5.5	3.8	4.6	5.0	4.5	3.5	4.0	4.1
124	6.4	4.2	4.2	6.3	4.5	4.8	5.3	4.8	4.0	4.7	4.7
103	7.4	5.0	5.5	7.5	5.2	6.4	6.8	5.3	4.8	5.5	5.7
71	8.4	6.4	5.8	8.3	7.2	7.1	7.9	6.2	5.8	6.8	6.7
984											

*Schools tested in the Nome District include:

Buckland
Diomede
Elim
Gambell
Kiana
King Island
Kivalina
Kotzebue
Koyuk
Noatak
Noorvik
Point Hope
Savoonga
Selawik
Shaktoolik
Shishmaref
Shungnak
Stebbins
St. Michaels
Teller
Unalakleet
Wales
White Mountain

TABLE 5.

MEDIANS FOR RIVER SYSTEM DISTRICT SCHOOLS,* SRA TESTS ADMINISTERED OCTOBER, 1957

		Work Study Skills		Reading		Language Arts			Arithmetic			Language Perception			
Number Tested	Grade Placement	References	Charts	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Capitalization Punctuation	Grammatical Usage	Spelling	Reasoning	Concepts	Computation	Auditory Discrimination	Visual Discrimination	Sight Vocabulary	Battery Median
90	2.1			1.9	2.1	2.5	2.5		2.3	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.1
106	3.1			2.2	2.7	2.9	2.8		2.5	2.6	2.9				2.6
89	4.1			2.8	3.5	3.6	3.7		3.1	3.2	3.3				3.3
94	5.1	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.4	5.0	6.4	4.3	4.9	4.9				4.6
66	6.1	5.3	5.6	4.6	5.0	5.2	5.5	7.5	5.1	5.6	5.6				5.5
57	7.1	5.6	6.8	6.0	6.4	7.8	7.1	7.4	6.2	6.3	5.7				6.0
54	8.1	6.9	7.3	7.2	7.2	9.3	8.8	8.9	7.4	7.5	7.8				7.6
556															

*Schools tested in the River System District include:

Allakaket
Aniak
Anvik
Bethel
Candle
Crooked Creek
Fortuna Ledge
Hughes
Fort Yukon
Kobuk
Koyukuk
McGrath
Nikolai
Nyac
Red Devil
Ruby
Russian Mission
Teller

equivalents -- in one instance by as much as 2.4 years. Also, in all areas the deviation from the national norm is greater in the upper grades than in the lower grades. Two major reasons for this fact emerge. In the Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, provisions are made for students who lack language and social skills to develop readiness for school work by enrolling as beginners, or pre-first graders, while chronologically their ages compare with normal first graders. As a result, in schools employing these practices, the first grade children have frequently been in school as beginners for one or two years prior to their entrance into the first grade. Not only are these children more mature physically, but they have often had school experiences which tend to offer a slight advantage on standardized tests which carries over into the first and second grades. Another possible explanation is that most of the verbal skills required in the primary grades depend almost entirely upon experiences in the home, in the community, and with members of the family. Such experiences are universal, hence more familiar to the young children than the abstract concepts demanded in the intermediate and advanced elementary school grades.

Test scores were analyzed in relation to the different subject matter areas to determine which areas show the greatest strengths and the greatest weaknesses. Two different methods were employed to make comparisons among subjects and also among test districts. Each subject area was separated. Those districts were noted which scored highest in each area, second highest, etc. From these ordinal place numbers, those subjects were determined in which scores ran highest, next highest, and on to the lowest scores. A second method was used which gave similar results. The deviations in months from national norms for each subject area were added algebraically for all grades. The sum was then divided by the number of grades for which subject matter scores were available. The dividend expresses the average deviation in months from the national grade equivalent. Results of these computations are included in Table 6.

Spelling is the subject which compares most favorably with the national grade equivalents. The overall success of native students in spelling can be attributed to the fact that it is a subject which can be learned by rote and memorized without any particular background or understanding. Numerous examples given by teachers indicate that native children can frequently spell words which they cannot define nor use. An additional explanation may be found in the common practice of using spelling as a type of busy work while the rural teacher works with other grades and groups. During visitations, the comment was often heard, "If you finish your assignment, work on your spelling while I am busy with the first grade." The fact that spelling can be

TABLE 6.

COMPARISON OF TEST RESULTS BASED ON THE AVERAGE DEVIATION FROM THE NATIONAL NORM*

	Vocabulary	Spelling	Paragraph Meaning	Arithmetic Reasoning	Arithmetic Computation	Language	Study Skills	Battery Median
Aleutian and Southern Coastal District	-9.3	-4.3	-12.1	-8.6	-6.7	-6.1	-13.3	-8.6
Bethel District	-17.0	-1.5	-14.5	-12.5	-8.3	-15.0	-14.0	-11.8
Fairbanks District	-11.5	-7.0	-8.5	-6.6	-6.8	-12.8	-15.8	-10.3
Nome District	-12.8	-0.5	-12.6	-8.8	-5.6	-15.5	-16.5	-10.5
River System District	-6.7	+9.5	-9.7	-6.3	-5.1	-0.6	-8.5	-5.7
ALASKA AVERAGES	-11.5	-0.8	-11.5	-8.6	-6.5	-10.0	-13.6	-9.4

*The derived scores above express in terms of months the average deviation of the test scores from the national norm. The derived score is arrived at by taking the average of the algebraic sum of the deviations of the recorded scores for the various areas.

memorized independently without direct instruction may have caused undue weight to have been placed on this subject.

The second highest subject area was arithmetic computation. Again, arithmetic computation can be learned through mechanical drill and does not depend too heavily upon comprehension. Arithmetic reasoning and language followed as subjects in which most scores were relatively high. Language scores were expected to be low. Close examination of the individual test items, however, showed that these sections of the tests called upon skill in capitalization, punctuation, and grammar and did not require undue facility or comprehension in English. It may be concluded that the title "language" is misleading as it is employed in the test section headings.

As one might imagine, the subject areas in which native students showed the greatest weaknesses were vocabulary, paragraph meaning, and study skills. All of these subjects rely to a great extent upon comprehension, English fluency, and environmental background.

Regional differences are apparent. However, less variation exists in the overall comparisons than might be expected, and exceptions were found. For example, it was assumed that Southeastern Alaska, which has experienced longer and more intensive outside contact than the other districts, would rank considerably higher in test results than any other region. Medians calculated for Hydaburg, Kake, and Klawock (see Table 7) indicated that the scores do not vary noticeably from those of other regions. In fact results from these three schools are lower in almost every instance than those from other divisions. Admittedly, the number of schools included in the sampling from Southeastern Alaska is small, due to the fact that many schools in this area are incorporated and do not participate in the regular testing program of the Territorial Department of Education. These results, therefore, may not typify schools from this region.

For purposes of comparing the other divisions, the system of tabulation was used whereby the total deviations from national norms for all grades were calculated (see Table 6). The following ordinal rank by districts can be seen: (1) River System District, (2) Aleutian and Southern Coastal District, (3) Fairbanks District, (4) Nome District, and (5) Bethel District. Unquestionably, in these regions there is a relationship between the period of non-native contact and achievement on standardized achievement tests. The region with the lowest overall achievement is the Bethel district which has been the last in Alaska to be exposed to outside influence and still retains a number of primitive, isolated and extremely backward communities. Schools were not established in this area until after 1900, and five of those schools included in the test calculations were established after 1925. The language handicap is especially noticeable

TABLE 7.

MEDIANS FOR HYDABURG, KAKE AND KLAWOCK SCHOOLS (COMBINED)* SRA TESTS ADMINISTERED OCTOBER, 1957

		Work Study Skills		Reading		Language Arts			Arithmetic			Language Perception			
Number Tested	Grade Placement	References	Charts	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Capitalization Punctuation	Grammatical Usage	Spelling	Reasoning	Concepts	Computation	Auditory Discrimination	Visual Discrimination	Sight Vocabulary	Battery Median
6	2.1			1.9	2.3	2.6	2.3		2.2	2.2	1.7	2.4	2.9	2.0	2.2
29	3.1			1.8	2.2	2.6	2.4		2.4	2.3	2.7				2.3
28	4.1			2.5	3.0	3.1	3.2		2.8	3.0	3.3				2.9
20	5.1	3.3	3.6	3.5	4.1	3.6	3.9	3.0	3.1	3.7	4.4				3.8
16	6.1	4.5	4.0	3.6	4.0	4.2	4.3	6.3	4.4	4.8	5.1				4.6
25	7.1	4.6	5.6	4.8	5.1	5.3	6.5	6.3	5.7	5.6	5.0				5.4
19	8.1	5.1	6.6	6.2	5.9	6.4	6.5	6.3	6.0	6.6	5.9				6.1
143															

*Incorporated Schools.

in the Bethel area, where a median deviation of -3.3 in word meaning at the eighth grade level was found.

Other evidences of the relationship between the period of non-native contact and achievement test results can be demonstrated by comparing the large native population centers, in which outside influences are readily apparent, with the test medians of the smaller communities in the surrounding regions. Complete test scores for the larger communities of Barrow, Bethel, Dillingham, Fort Yukon, and Nome are included in Tables 8 through 12. Table 13 shows the comparison of the battery medians for four of these population centers with those of schools in the same general geographical regions. Barrow scores were not included in the comparisons, since overcrowded conditions have necessitated the sending of students in the upper grades to the elementary boarding school at Wrangell. Those students showing the greatest academic aptitude were selected to go to Wrangell. Therefore, the median test scores for Barrow in the upper grades -- particularly the eighth -- are misleading.

The test scores listed are raw scores which have been converted from tables in the test manuals to group grade norms. These norms merely compare raw scores made by other pupils of a specified grade status. In interpreting test scores, however, the age factor is important, yet not accounted for in the grade norms used. It has been

TABLE 8.

MEDIANS FOR BARROW DAY SCHOOL, STANFORD TESTS ADMINISTERED JANUARY, 1958

Number Tested	Grade Placement	Paragraph Meaning	Word Meaning	Spelling	Language	Arithmetic Reasoning	Arithmetic Computation	Social Studies	Science	Study Skills	Battery Median
31	3.4	3.1	3.1	3.7	3.6	2.8	2.8				3.1
34	4.4	3.3	3.2	4.0	3.3	4.0	4.2				3.7
32	5.4	4.0	4.4	6.0	5.2	4.4	4.5	4.5	3.7	3.9	4.4
32	6.4	4.5	4.5	6.8	6.2	5.6	5.6	5.1	4.9	4.9	5.3
29	7.4	5.5	5.0	7.1	5.6	6.0	6.6	5.1	4.7	5.2	5.5
9	8.4	5.7	4.8	7.1	6.0	5.6	6.4	6.2	5.0	6.0	5.2
167											

TABLE 9.

MEDIANS FOR BETHEL SCHOOL (RIVER SYSTEM DISTRICT) SRA TESTS ADMINISTERED OCTOBER,1957

		Work Study Skills		Reading		Language Arts			Arithmetic			Language Perception			
Number Tested	Grade Placement	References	Charts	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Capitalization Punctuation	Grammatical Usage	Spelling	Reasoning	Concepts	Computation	Auditory Discrimination	Visual Discrimination	Sight Vocabulary	Battery Median
18	2.1			1.7	2.0	2.3	2.3		2.1	2.0	1.6	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.0
23	3.1			2.4	2.7	2.6	3.1		2.5	2.3	2.6				2.6
16	4.1			2.8	3.8	3.7	4.8		2.9	3.2	3.3				3.5
16	5.1	4.6	3.8	3.7	4.3	4.7	5.0	6.7	3.6	3.9	4.8				4.4
19	6.1	6.1	5.6	5.3	5.5	5.3	5.3	8.0	4.8	5.6	5.5				5.6
10	7.1	6.9	7.6	7.8	7.1	8.8	7.5	7.8	6.7	6.0	6.1				7.0
16	8.1	8.6	8.0	7.4	7.9	10.2	8.8	10.3	8.1	7.5	8.6				8.8
118															

TABLE 10.

MEDIANS FOR DILLINGHAM SCHOOL (ALEUTIAN AND SOUTHERN COASTAL DISTRICT) SRA TESTS ADMINISTERED OCTOBER, 1957

		Work Study Skills		Reading		Language Arts			Arithmetic			Language Perception			
Number Tested	Grade Placement	References	Charts	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Capitalization Punctuation	Grammatical Usage	Spelling	Reasoning	Concepts	Computation	Auditory Discrimination	Visual Discrimination	Sight Vocabulary	Battery Median
11	2.1			2.1	2.3	2.6	2.5		2.3	2.2	2.6	2.4	2.9	2.3	2.3
17	3.1			2.7	3.3	2.9	3.2		2.9	2.6	2.8				2.8
16	4.1			3.3	3.8	3.8	3.7		3.5	3.9	3.7				3.8
16	5.1	4.2	3.8	4.3	4.4	3.3	4.8	5.5	3.9	3.7	4.9				4.3
16	6.1	5.0	4.6	4.5	4.7	3.9	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.9	5.4				4.7
22	7.1	6.5	7.6	7.1	6.6	6.4	6.8	7.1	6.5	6.6	5.4				6.9
17	8.1	7.1	7.3	8.1	8.1	7.3	7.8	8.9	7.7	7.0	7.3				7.6
115															

TABLE 11.

MEDIANS FOR FORT YUKON SCHOOL (RIVER SYSTEM DISTRICT)
SRA TESTS ADMINISTERED OCTOBER, 1957

		Work Study Skills		Reading		Language Arts			Arithmetic			Language Perception			
Number Tested	Grade Placement	References	Charts	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Capitalization Punctuation	Grammatical Usage	Spelling	Reasoning	Concepts	Computation	Auditory Discrimination	Visual Discrimination	Sight Vocabulary	Battery Median
21	2.1			1.9	2.0	2.7	2.5		2.4	1.9	1.9	2.0	1.9	1.7	2.0
20	3.1			2.3	2.6	2.8	2.6		2.3	2.6	2.7				2.5
24	4.1			2.7	3.5	3.5	3.6		2.9	3.2	3.4				3.4
22	5.1	4.6	4.3	4.3	3.9	4.9	5.1	7.0	4.9	5.6	5.2				4.9
14	6.1	5.1	4.9	4.5	4.3	4.8	6.0	7.5	5.5	5.6	6.3				5.7
13	7.1	5.6	7.1	5.3	6.4	6.4	5.6	6.8	6.7	6.0	5.3				6.0
9	8.1	6.5	7.9	8.1	7.9	8.8	8.3	9.8	8.1	7.0	7.8				7.8
123															

TABLE 12.

MEDIANS FOR NOME SCHOOL* STANFORD TESTS ADMINISTERED 1957,1958

Number Tested	Grade Placement	Paragraph Meaning	Word Meaning	Spelling	Language	Arithmetic Reasoning	Arithmetic Computation	Social Studies	Science	Study Skills	Battery Median
30	2.2	1.8	1.9	2.2		2.0	2.3				2.1
30	3.2	3.1	2.8	3.2	1.8	2.5	2.8				2.8
52	4.8	3.6	3.8	5.0	3.5	3.2	4.4				3.9
54	6.7	6.4	6.6	7.8	8.1	6.9	6.2	7.3	7.2	6.8	6.6
49	8.2	7.6	7.5	9.6	8.5	8.4	8.6	8.9	8.7	7.8	8.1
215											

*Incorporated District School

TABLE 13.

COMPARISON OF BATTERY MEDIANS[a] ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

Grade	Fort Yukon	Fairbanks District	Dillingham	Aleutian and Southern Coastal District	Bethel	Bethel District	Nome	Nome District
2	-.1	-.5	+.2	-.1	-.1	-.4	-.1	-.4
3	-.6	-1.0	-.3	-.4	-.5	-.8	-.4	-.5
4	-.7	-.5	+.3	-.9	-.6	-1.1	-.9	-1.2
5	-.2	-.9	-.8	-1.1	-.7	-1.2	--[b]	-1.3
6	-.4	-1.7	-1.4	-1.4	-.5	-1.9	-.1	-1.7
7	-1.1	-1.7	-.2	-1.0	-.1	-1.6	--[b]	-1.7
8	-.3	-2.0	-.5	-1.2	+.7	-2.4	-.1	-1.7

[a] Figures show deviation from the National Norm.

[b] Scores for Grades 5 and 7 not available.

explained that many native schools have groups of beginners, or pre-first graders, who are old enough to be in the first grade, yet are placed in separate groups to devel sufficient readiness for a regular first grade curriculum. Such practices, together with extremely high rates of non-promotion and irregular attendance, have created a problem of overageness which cannot be ignored in interpreting test scores. For example, the fourth grade student who is sixteen years old may score at the fourth grade level according to the grade norm. But the fact that he has spent approximately nine years in school to attain this level makes the comparison of his achievement with that of a fourth grader who scores at the national norm but who is nine or ten years old an extremely unfavorable one.

The problem of overageness in native schools will be dealt with in detail in a later chapter. However, to illustrate the seriousness of the situation and its relationship to the testing program certain calculations were made. A formula was devised in which the battery median score by district was divided by the normal grade placement which would be expected if native children had entered the first grade at the age of six and had progressed a grade a year. Median ages of native children in schools in each district for which test scores were available were used to determine normal grade placement. For example, the battery median in grade eight in the Bethel area was 6.4. The median age of eighth graders in the Bethel area was found to be 16. Therefore, assuming normal grade placement, the children would have had a grade placement of 11.8 at the time of the testing program. Dividing the median scores attained (6.4) by the normal grade placement according to date at the time of testing (11.8), the quotient of .54 is obtained. While this formula is an arbitrary one designed to show only the effects of overageness and has no statistical validity, the result does indicate the approximate percentage of normal achievement, considering both age and test scores, attained by native students. It may be shown that while the median grade norm for grade eight in the Bethel area is 6.4, or 2.4 below the national norms, when the age factor is entered eighth graders scored only 54 per cent of what might be considered normal expectations — which, then is only slightly over a fourth grade level. Scores tabulated in this manner may be seen for the five districts in Table 14.

When the age factor is considered, therefore, the gap in achievement between native schools and national norms becomes considerably wider. Again, regional differences are noticeable and will be shown in the detailed discussion of the problem of age-grade placement. However, in addition to having the lowest overall group grade medians, the Bethel area also shows the greatest amount of overageness which tends to enlarge the regional differences already discussed.

TABLE 14.

DECIMAL INDEX QUOTIENTS*

Grade	Aleutian and Southern Coastal District	Bethel District	Fairbanks District	Nome District	River System District	National Decimal Index Quotient
1		.47	.65	.63		1.0
2	.68	.41	.58	.59	.68	1.0
3	.66	.38	.46	.54	.63	1.0
4	.63	.42	.54	.59	.65	1.0
5	.66	.52	.55	.55	.65	1.0
6	.66	.45	.57	.56	.68	1.0
7	.75	.57	.61	.61	.66	1.0
8	.76	.54	.62	.64	.84	1.0

*Decimal Index Quotient is derived from the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Battery Median}}{\text{Grade Equivalent + No. Years Over Age}} = \text{Decimal Index Quotient}$$

Thus the National Norm Decimal Index Quotient for Grade 2 tests administered October 1957 would be:

$$\frac{2.2}{2.2 + 0} = 1.0$$

Schools in Southeastern Alaska more nearly approach normal age-grade placement than do schools in any of the other districts.

Results from Non-verbal Tests

Without exception, students enrolled in native schools show considerable retardation in test areas dependent upon English comprehension. Because of this indication of a language handicap, some experimentation was done with non-verbal tests in an attempt to determine the approximate effects of the language factor on test results.

Initially, the *Non-Language Multi-Mental Test* was used. However, pictured objects not familiar to most native students make up the test items and are considered inappropriate for isolated Alaskan schools. Therefore, in the remaining three villages in which non-verbal tests were employed the *Lorge-Thorndike Intelligence Test*, Non-verbal Battery, was used. This test contains numbers and geometric designs rather than pictured objects and is believed to be more suitable for native schools.

Grade equivalents were obtained from both non-verbal tests. These grade equivalents were then matched with the group norms attained by the same pupils for whom test scores from standardized achievement tests were available. With the very restricted test sampling of native pupils in which non-verbal tests were used, there is a tendency for the grade equivalents on the non-verbal tests to be higher by an average of approximately seven months than scores for the same pupils on verbal achievement tests. The expected indication is that native pupils do experience a language handicap which influences their scores on verbal tests.

While the non-verbal tests appear to be more suitable for native students than the highly verbal achievement tests, there is, nevertheless, a cultural bias inherent in all non-verbal tests which tends to reduce the validity of the results when used in native schools. Anastasi describes this fact as follows:

> Any test . . . will tend to favor individuals from the culture in which it was developed. The mere use of paper and pencil or the presentation of abstract tasks which have no immediate practical significance will favor some cultural groups and handicap others. Emotional and motivational factors likewise influence test performance. Among the many relevant conditions which differ from culture to culture may be mentioned the intrinsic interest of the test content, rapport with the examiner, drive to do well on a test, desire to excel others, and past habits of solving problems individually or cooperatively.[1]

However, even with obvious disadvantages, a wide range of intelligence quotients was obtained in each school in which tests were given, and the median I.Q.'s are not far below normal. The slight retardation in I.Q.'s as indicated by the non-verbal tests might easily be accounted for by the foreign cultural background of those students tested. Test results obtained from non-verbal tests are shown below:

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[1] Anne Anastasi, *Psychological Testing* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1954), p. 256.

Village	Test Administered	Number Tested	Range of I. Q.	Median I. Q.
Barrow	Lorge-Thorndike Nonverbal Test (Forms 3A and 4A)	61	47-113	91
Craig	Lorge-Thorndike Nonverbal Test (Forms 4A and 5A)	14	86-122	100
Klawock	Lorge-Thorndike Nonverbal Test (Forms 3A and 4A)	20	62-101	83
Kotzebue	Non-Language Multi-Mental Test (Forms A and B)	49	51-165	91

Racial Differences in Test Results

While the period and intensity of outside contact does affect the achievement test scores of native students, it is an oversimplification to consider this the only, or even the prime, factor relating to the scholastic success of native students. Detailed studies were conducted in the Fairbanks and Nome public schools which are integrated schools enrolling full-blooded natives, mixed bloods, and non-natives. Both studies show a gap between the achievement of native students and non-native students as well as a slight tendency toward lower scholastic achievement as the degree of native blood increases. This fact was corroborated by analyses of achievement test scores in Barrow, Bethel, Dillingham, and Kotzebue where it was found that the scores are generally in direct proportion to the degree of native blood, with the full-blooded natives scoring lowest and the students with one-fourth native blood scoring highest. While a considerable gap exists between the achievement of native and non-native pupils in Nome, few noticeable differences were found between students of mixed blood and full-blooded natives in overall achievement.

Similarities existed in the findings in the Nome and Fairbanks studies, although the school situations are quite different. Native students in the Fairbanks public schools constitute a distinct minority, with a native enrollment of 328 in a total school enrollment of 4,002.[1] By contrast, native students in the Nome schools number 505 in a total enrollment of 618.[2] Nome, therefore, is a native school with a mixed enrollment, whereas Fairbanks is decidedly not a native school, but rather a school for non-native pupils with a sprinkling of native students in attendance throughout the system.

The Fairbanks study shows a stable native school population. Approximately [illegible] per cent of the native students have spent their entire school years in Fairbanks. Attemptr were made to isolate factors contributing to school success. Race, degree of blood, village of birth, retardation by age, and home background were all considered in an effort to show direct relationships between these factors and school success.

Generally, Eskimo students rank higher in overall academic achievement than do Indian pupils; however, the differences are too small to be conclusive. Without question, school marks and standardized test scores show weaknesses among native students in the subject matter areas of vocabulary and the social sciences, whereas spelling scores are consistently high. These findings compare with those of the native schools in the outlying areas as well as with the school in Nome.

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[1] Statistics furnished by the Alaska Commissioner of Education for the school year 1956-57.

[2] *Ibid.*

Both the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the California Test of Mental Maturity have been administered to elementary school children in the Fairbanks public schools. Native students were found to be approximately two months below the national norms on the Iowa Test and six months below the median scores of the non-native students. It should be noted in regard to the achievement test results that native children in the Fairbanks public schools, as in the village schools, have been retarded in grade placement and are overage. The retardation rate for native students is approximately 40 per cent as compared with a retardation rate of approximately 15 per cent for non-native students. This fact tends to make the gap in academic achievement slightly larger than test scores alone indicate.

The scores on the California Test show that 45 per cent of the native children tested are in the low-average category (I. Q. 85-99), 27 per cent in the high-average (I.Q. 100-114), and 17 per cent with I. Q.'s below 85. The

California Test provides for a division of the parts of the examination into sections labeled "Language Factors" and "Non-Language Factors." Native students tend to score higher on the non-language factors of the test, again demonstrating a language handicap even for those native students born in the Fairbanks area.

Perhaps the most significant finding in the Fairbanks study was the strong relationship which occurs between the home backgrounds of native students and their scholastic success. Case studies of native students from two selected elementary schools were conducted in which it was discovered that without exception the most retarded students come from broken homes. Thirteen of the pupils in the study come from children's homes partially subsidized by the Territorial Department of Public Welfare. Of these thirteen students, only two have grade averages and standardized test scores which are average or above. Chaney concludes in his study, "There seems to be very strong support for the conclusion that given a wholesome home background and a reasonable feeling of security, the Alaskan Native, irrespective of degree of blood, will achieve very well indeed in a large public elementary school . . ."[1]

Findings in the Nome study follow those of the

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[1] Nathan H. Chaney, "A Case Study of the Problem of Adjustment of Native Students in Two Elementary Schools in Fairbanks, Alaska" (Unpublished research paper, Department of Education, University of Alaska, August, 1958), p. 50.

Fairbanks study in most instances, although the gap in achievement between native and non-native pupils is more pronounced. A comparison according to degree of blood was made of the percentile ratings of students in grades two, three, seven, and eight as shown by the Stanford Achievement Test results. This comparison is included in Table 15.[1] It can be seen that while there is a marked difference between the achievement of native and non-native students in all subject matter areas, few noticeable differences appear between native students and students of mixed blood.

The Nome study confirms the importance of home background in relation to the pupil's achievement in school. A definite correlation was found between the educational achievement of parents and that of their children. An additional village study conducted in Bethel also bore out this relationship.

As in Fairbanks, the retention rate in Nome is extremely high. Approximately 50 per cent of all pupils in the Nome public schools in grades two through eight have been retained in at least one grade.

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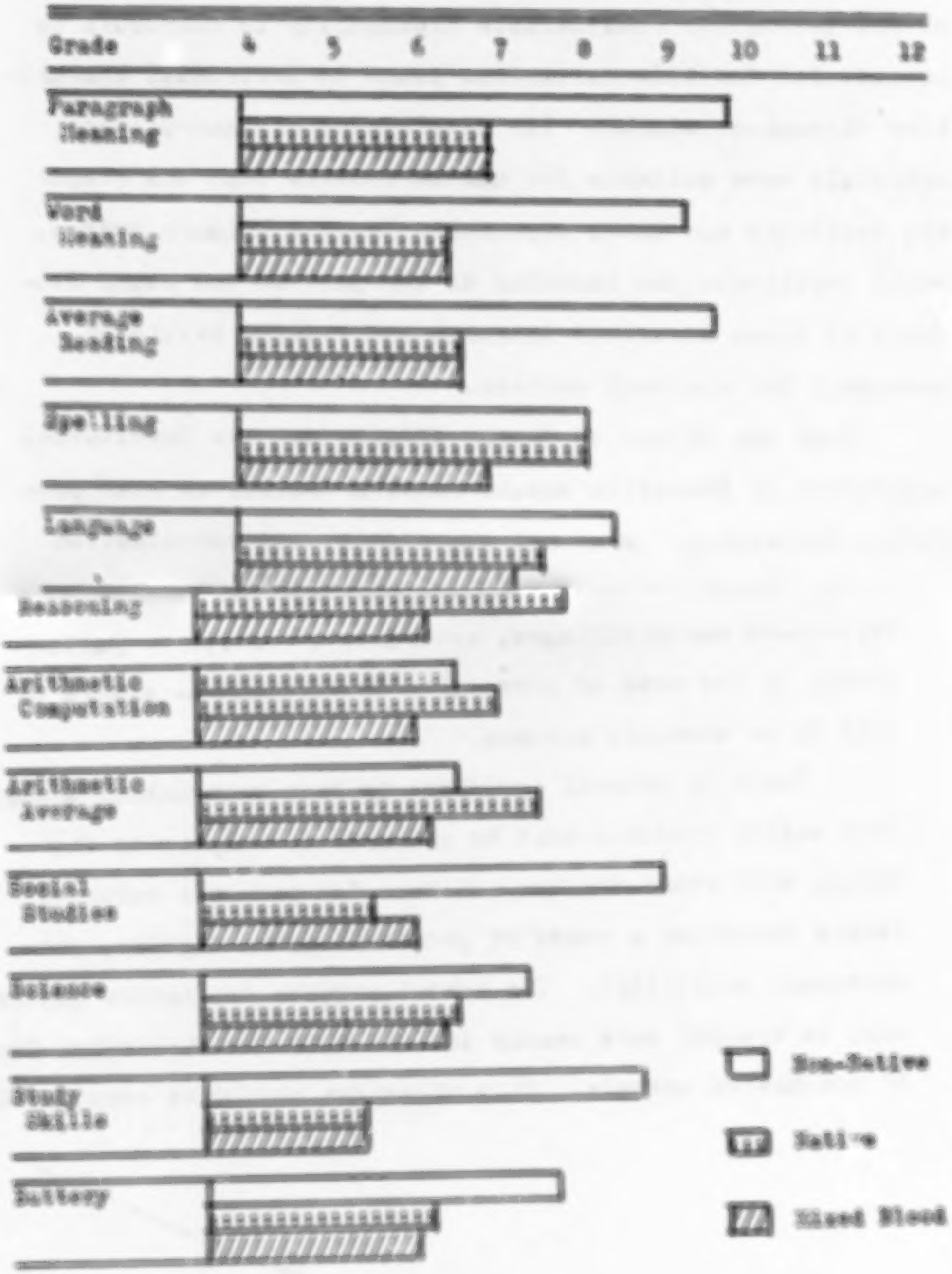
[1] Alice S. Wilson, "The Acculturation of Alaskan Natives in the Public School at Nome, Alaska" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Education, University of Alaska, 1958), p. 94.

TABLE 15.

COMPARISON OF NATIVE, NON-NATIVE AND MIXED BLOOD CHILDREN ACCORDING TO SCORES ATTAINED ON STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TESTS



Conclusions and Recommendations

Conditions in native schools indicate the desirability of provisions for considerable flexibility in curricula to account for the wide variations found in individual communities throughout Alaska. The development of instructional materials more suitable for native schools than the standard textbooks now used, especially for the primary grades, would facilitate the learning on the part of the young students of those essential language and reading skills so necessary for academic success.

Both the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Territorial Department of Education should concern themselves with providing leadership, technical assistance, and coordination which will facilitate adaptability at the district and local village levels. With the existence of considerable variations among villages, centralized control -- particularly in the area of curriculum development -- should be held to an absolute minimum.

There is general agreement by both both school agencies that native students must be prepared to compete in the future with other Alaskan citizens for economic security (while retaining a sense of personal worth, dignity, and emotional stability). The school program for native pupils must be brought more nearly in line with the curriculum found in non-native schools. This objective should be considered as a long-range goal, however, and should not imply uniformity of curriculum or instruction without sufficient consideration for the aptitudes and backgrounds of the learners. Education must remain an individualized process whereby a pupil is not categorized by race but is encouraged to progress as rapidly as his own capacity will permit.

Standardized tests designed for the typical American culture are not accurate measures of intelligence or achievement in native schools. An analysis of standardized achievement tests which have been used in native schools in Alaska (*Stanford Achievement Tests and SRA Achievement Series*) revealed a more noticeable culture loading of items in the *Stanford Achievement Tests* than is found in the *SRA*. There would be advantages for purposes of comparison in the use of common tests. Therefore, it appears that the *SRA Tests* might be examined carefully by the Bureau of Indian Affairs for possible use in their schools. An additional advantage found in this battery includes arrangements which can be made for machine scoring and uniform tabulations.

Despite the many weaknesses of standardized tests and the real danger of misinterpretation of the results, their continued use is justified on the grounds that they may serve as fair predictors of academic success for pupils attending schools which maintain curricula resembling those common in the United States. Achievement of native students, as indicated by standardized tests, lags behind national norms by a considerable margin. Therefore, the present outlook for academic success on the part of native pupils in a typical school program is not bright.

The fact that the majority of native students lacks aptitude in areas relying on verbal skills and the use of abstractions does not mean that these pupils must be relegated to carrying out unrelated tasks not calling for these abilities. Rather, this weakness must be viewed as a handicap which can be overcome through thoughtful instruction, patience, and understanding. Only by this means can the distance between native and non-native achievement be narrowed. The school program must include experiences in addition to those stressing academic and verbal skills. The student must be allowed to know success and through exploration in various areas helped to discover his individual aptitudes and interests. Still, even the most menial vocation today requires skill in communication and basic knowledge required of all intelligent citizens. For positions of leadership, even more education is demanded. Attention must be given to building up the pupil's background and readiness for school activities.

The feasibility of extending the school day or school year for students from particularly restricted environments might be considered. With Bureau of Indian Affairs personnel employed on a regular twelve-month basis, such a plan would not involve excessive additional expense. The Territorial Department of Education would experience greater difficulties in implementing a program of this sort. The type of educational program carried out in the summer months with native students might differ radically from the regular classroom routine and could include such activities as boy and girl scout training, miscellaneous youth projects, camping, and dramatics. Guided work experience might also be provided. A program of this type would have the advantages of providing additional enrichment for regular school work and offering opportunities for exploration in fields not emphasized in the regular curriculum. It would also help negate the noticeable loss in learning which, according to experienced teachers of native pupils, accrues in a three-month vacation during which many students do not use English and otherwise lose much readiness for school work which must be reinforced during the academic year.

CHAPTER III

SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION FOR ALASKAN NATIVES

One of the most critical problems in Alaskan education today concerns the provision of high school facilities for native youth and the establishment of realistic objectives of secondary school education. In this report the term "high school" refers to grades nine through twelve inclusive.

Most native communities in Alaska were established at a time when the entire economy was based upon natural resources in the form of fish, game, and fur-bearing animals. Since the wealth of the village depended upon the abundance of wildlife, the communities for the most part were small and widely scattered in order that the resources in the immediate vicinity might provide for the number of residents in the villages.

In recent years the native population has generally increased, mobility of population has become pronounced, and certain communities have shown rapid growth. The fact remains, however, that most native communities are too small to maintain a secondary school. A number of villages remain quite inaccessible for long periods of time each year. Tables 16 and 17 illustrate the present size of

TABLE 16.

POPULATION TRENDS OF VILLAGES IN WHICH BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS SCHOOLS ARE BEING OPERATED[a]

Towns	1930	1940	1950	1957[b]	Gain or Loss
Akiak	228	203	168	198	-30
Akiachak		138	179	180	+42
Alakanuk		61	140	238	+177
Arctic Village	40	34	53	68	+28
Atka	103	89	85	103	0
Barrow	330	363	951	1274	+944
Beaver	103	88	101	109	+6
Buckland	104[b]	109[b]	108	86	-18
Chaneliak	34	92	100	75	+41
Chevak		43	230	267	+224
Chakaktolik		60	98	69	+9
Circle	50	58	83	54	+4
Deering	103	230	174	80	-23
Diomede		129[b]	103	114	-15
Eagle	54	73	55	55	+1
Eek		170	141	192	+22
Elim	97[b]	96[b]	134	103	+6
English Bay	107	48	73	58	-49
Galena	47	44	176	135	+88
Gambell	250	296	309	309	+59
Hollikachuk		77	98	95	+18
Hooper Bay	209	299	307	415	+206
Kalskag		76	139	129	+53
Kaltag	137	140	121	130	-7
Kasigluk		68	111	191	+123
Kiana	113	167	181	199	+86
King Island		197[b]	147[b]	97	-100
Kipnuk		144	185	208	+64
Kivalina	99	98	117	129	+30
Klukwan	97	97	91	109	+12
Koliganek			90	94	+4
Kotzebue	291	372	623	834	+543
Koyuk	110	100	134	120	+10
Kwethluk		186	242	233	+47

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[a] Population figures, 1930 through 1950, from Table 3, U. S. Bureau of the Census, U. S. Census of Population: 1950. Vol. II, Characteristics of the Population, Parts 51-54, Territories and Possessions. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1953).

[b] Obtained from most recent unofficial sources.

TABLE 16. (Continued)

Manokotak			120	117	-3
Mekoryuk		210^b	156	170	-40
Minto		135	152	156	+21
Mountain Village	76	128	221	234	+158
Napakiak		113	139	169	+56
Napaskiak		67	121	180	+113
Nash Harbor			49	35	-14
New Stuyahok			88	114	+26
Nightmute		78	87	184	+106
Noatak	212	336	326	302	+90
Noorvik	198	211	248	340	+142
Northway (Nabesna)			196	92	-104
Nunapitchuk		121	125	284	+163
Pilot Station	87	39	52	129	+42
Point Hope	139	257	264	267	+128
Point Lay		117	75	36	-81
Quinhagak	230^b	224	194	217	-13
St. Michael	147	142	157	144	-3
Savoonga	139	209	249	265	+126
Scammon Bay		88	103	110	+22
Selawik	227	239	273	296	+69
Shageluk	88	92	100	115	+27
Shaktoolik	104^b	128	127	172	+68
Shishmaref	223	257	194	187	-36
Shungnak	145	193	141	166	+21
Sleetmute	133	86	120	150	+17
Solomon		106	93	34	-72
Stebbins		98	115	145	+47
Stevens Village	48^b	54	84	79	+31
Tanacross	80	135	137	111	+31
Tanana	185	170	228	227	+42
Tatitlek	70	75	89	87	+17
Teller Mission	76^b	186^b	109	95	+19
Tetlin		66	73	92	+26
Togiak	71	10	108	174	+103
Tuluksak	96	88	116	124	+28
Tuntutuliak			68	124	+56
Tununak		65	112	140	+75
Unalakleet	261	329	469	525	+264
Venetie		86	81	71	-15
Wainwright	197	341	227	216	+19
Wales	170	193	141	109	-61
White Mountain	205	199	129	118	-87

TABLE 17.

POPULATION TRENDS OF VILLAGES IN WHICH TERRITORIAL NATIVE SCHOOLS ARE BEING OPERATED[a]

Towns	1930	1940	1950	1957[b]	Gain or Loss
Afognak	298	197	158		-140
Akutan	71	80	86		+15
Aleknagik		78	153		+75
Allakaket		105	79		-26
Aniak		122	142		+20
Angoon	319	342	429	363	+44
Anvik	79	110	99		+20
Belkofski	123	140	119		-4
Bethel	278	376	651	1000	+722
Bettles Field	23	10	47		+24
Candle	85	119	105		+20
Chenega	90	95	91		+1
Chignik		224	253		+29
Clark's Point	25	22	128		+103
Copper Center	80	138	90		+10
Craig	231	505	374		+143
Crooked Creek		48	43		-5
Dillingham	85	278	577	850	+765
Egegik	86	125	119		+33
Ekwok	40	68	131	87	+47
Fort Yukon	304	274	446	675	+371
Haines	344	357	338		-6
Hoonah	514	716	563		+49
Hydaburg	319	348	353		+34
Kake	386	419	376		-10
Karluk	192	189	144		-48
Kasaan	112	85	47		-65
King Cove		135	162		+27
Klawock	437	455	404		-33
Kobuk		31	38		+7
Koyukuk	143	106	79		-64
Larsen Bay		38	53		+15
Levelock			76	126	+50

[a] Population figures, 1930 through 1950, from Table 5, U. S. Bureau of the Census, U. S. Census of Population: 1950. Vol. II, Characteristics of the Population, Parts 51-54, Territories and Possessions. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1953).

[b] Obtained from most recent unofficial sources.

TABLE 17.(Continued)

Towns	1930	1940	1950	1957[b]	Gain or Loss
McGrath	112	138	175		+63
Naknek	173	152	174		+1
Nenana	291	231	242		-49
Newhalen		55	48	50	-5
Nikolski	109	97	66		-43
Nome	1213	1559	1876	1750	+537
Nondalton	94	82	123		+29
Nyac	3	33	62		+59
Old Harbor	84	109	121		+37
Pauloff Harbor	52	61	68		+16
Pedro Bay			64		
Pile Bay			48		
Pilot Point		114	67	47	-67
Port Graham		93	92		-1
Ruby	132	138	132		0
Russian Mission	54	56	55		+1
Sand Point	69	93	107		+38
Seldovia	379	410	437		+58
Takotna	85	70	62		-23
Teller	76	118	160		+84
Tyonek	78	136	132		+54
Unalaska	206	298	173		-33
Unga	150	152	107		-43
Yakutat	265	292	298		+33

communities with schools enrolling more than one-half native students and the gain or loss in total population since 1930.

Following the pattern of rural schools in the United States, educational agencies in Alaska have established and operate schools in remote communities having an adequate school population. However, with few exceptions, the rural schools established provide an elementary school education only. Therefore, the problem of providing education beyond the eighth grade level is a major one, and an ideal solution is not readily available.

Different approaches to the problem of providing an expanding program of secondary school education have been made by the Territorial Department of Education and the Bureau of Indian Affairs and reflect somewhat different viewpoints concerning the general objectives of secondary school education in Alaska.

The Organization and Curriculum of Territorial Secondary Schools

The policy of the Territorial Department of Education has been to establish secondary school facilities at the local village level even though the school population is so small in many instances that the curriculum is restricted seriously and academic subjects are stressed.

The following six communities possessing a native school population of at least 50 per cent offer regular and modified public high school programs:[1]

Community	High School Enrollment	Elementary School Enrollment
Bethel	25	219
Craig	12	95
Dillingham	48	141
Metlakatla	11	196
Nenana	12	87
Nome	103	482

Of these six schools, only the high school at Nome enrolls more than one hundred pupils and is accredited by the Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools.[2]

It is apparent that such small high schools are handicapped severely in making available the wide selection of courses desirable to prepare a diverse high school population for advanced education and, in the majority of instances, to provide terminal education. (In practice, the curricula of these schools are almost entirely academic and allow few, if any, electives to be selected by the pupils.)

Each school varies slightly in its organization for high school instruction. Most of the schools draw on elementary school teachers to instruct certain courses at the secondary school level. In the *Alaska Educational Directory* for 1957-58, however, only one person is listed as a high school teacher in Metlakatla.[1] Nome, on the other hand, has a sufficient secondary school population to justify employing seven persons who are specifically designated as high school teachers and who teach different courses commonly found in small high schools.[2]

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[1] *Alaska Educational Directory, School Year 1957-1958* (Juneau: Territorial Department of Education, 1958), pp. 14, 24, 38, 39, 41.

[2] *Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1956*, p. 30.

The 1949 edition of the *Administrative Manual* issued by the Alaska Department of Education suggests in detail a method by which one teacher might instruct all high school offerings. By combining ninth grade pupils with tenth and eleventh graders with twelfth, the teacher would instruct eight different subjects a year and would alternate courses for odd and even years.[3] This schedule is listed as follows:

Suggested Schedule

One-Teacher Four-Year High School

Odd Years		*Even Years*	
English I	(9-10)	English II	(9-10)
English III . . .	(11-12)	English IV	(11-12)
World History . .	(9-10)		
American History.	(11-12)	U. S. Civics and Commercial Law	(11-12)
General Science .	(9-10)	Biology	(9-10)

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[1] *Alaska Educational Directory, School Year 1957-1958*, p. 41.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

[3] *Administrative Manual*, Territory of Alaska (Juneau: Department of Education, 1949), p. 11.

Algebra or General Mathematics	(9-10)
Bookkeeping	(11-12)
Physiology (Health and Physical Geography or Elementary Geology	(11-12)
Physical Education	(9-10)
Economics and Sociology	(11-12)
Social Civics and General Business	(9-10)
Alaska History	(11-12)
Electives	1½ units

The limitations involved in having eight subjects in diverse fields taught by one teacher are obvious. Sufficient knowledge of the subject content required for teaching such areas as science, mathematics, commercial subjects, social sciences, and English would be found only in rare instances.

Perhaps in recognition of the weaknesses inherent in the extremely small high school, the Territorial Department of Education revised its organizational pattern for such schools. According to the 1958 issue of the Administrative Manual:

> Fully-approved four-year high schools must have a sufficient number of students to justify the full-time equivalency of four teachers. High schools having less than the equivalency of four teachers, offering less than four years of work for grades 9 - 12, or unable to offer the basic areas outlined above, must request annual consideration by the Department of Education for operation.[1]

With the exception of Nome, the local secondary schools described are so small and limited in their course offerings as to raise serious questions concerning their effectiveness in providing a satisfactory high school education for Alaskan youth. To further complicate the situation, however, the communities operating local high schools are relatively large in comparison with other native communities. Therefore, even if such small high schools are preferable to various alternative methods for providing secondary school facilities, the problem remains unsolved for the smaller communities where high school enrollments would be smaller still than those of the high schools now being operated.

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[1] Administrative Manual, Territory of Alaska (Juneau: Department of Education, 1958), p. 14.

The Pilot High School Experiment

As an experiment directed toward partially solving the problem of providing secondary school education for children in remote areas, since 1939 the Territorial Department of Education has purchased correspondence courses for "high school pupils living in areas where no schools are maintained" and for "high school pupils in small high schools outside incorporated districts who have special needs that cannot be met locally."[1]

In an effort to give more system and organization to correspondence study, an experimental high school program was established in 1955 and is described by the Commissioner of Education:

> Under this "pilot" program, such pupils bring the correspondence work to school for super-

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[1] Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1956, p. 37.

> vision by a regular teacher. Additionally, eighth grade graduates from the year preceding are continued on, partially through formal instruction and partially through correspondence work. The program will be continued through 1956-57 for further evaluation. Pilot high schools were operated at Hope, Ninilchik, and Glenallen during 1955-56 with a total enrollment in each school as follows: Hope, 8; Ninilchik, 20; and Glenallen, 21.[1]

Essentially, the pilot high school program is supervised correspondence study with the teacher's tasks primarily those of taking attendance, helping pupils with their individual academic problems, and reviewing and mailing completed correspondence lessons. No formal instruction takes place except perhaps in the non-elective subjects at the ninth grade level, nor does the teacher evaluate the completed lessons. The courses are purchased by the Territorial Department of Education from the University Extension Division of the University of Nebraska, lessons are scored by the University of Nebraska personnel, and credit is given by that institution for work completed satisfactorily.

While final evaluation of the pilot high school program is not possible at this time, there are indications that the program is not proving to be satisfactory. Of the three teachers engaged in this experiment, only the teacher at Hope believed that the plan might hold promise. The teachers at Glennallen and Ninilchik saw serious shortcomings in the program and could only imply that perhaps it was "better than nothing." A conversation with Helen March, a member of the Territorial Board of Education, reflected her dissatisfaction with the program. She stated that complaints had been received from parents whose children were participating in the experiment.[1] Also, in interviews conducted by the Executive Director of this research study, parents in the Copper River area who were acquainted with the pilot high school operation at Glennallen declared that the correspondence courses failed to satisfy the need for high school facilities in which direct instruction was provided.

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[1] Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1956, p. 47.

While native children have taken high school work by correspondence, the three communities in which pilot high schools were operated are not predominantly native in population. Therefore, in light of the fact that this program is meeting with difficulties in its present operation,[2] the surmise can be made that expansion of this plan to include native villages would not be successful. In fact, there would probably be less motivation to succeed in this type of school program on the part of students in native communities where education has been an imposed and a relatively recent force than in non-native locations. Also, language problems experienced by bilingual groups may be a particularly telling handicap for the student who is compelled to study with a minimum of instruction and to gain most of his insights from texts, workbooks, and written instructions.

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[1] Conversation with Helen March, September 12, 1957.

[2] From 1939 to 1956 a total of 547 high school courses had been ordered by the Territorial Department of Education. However, over one-half of these courses were either incomplete or had been reported dropped or failed. (Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1956, p. 37.)

By the nature of their organization, both the small local high schools and the pilot high schools have limited curricular offerings and can provide only a purely academic program. Obviously a course such as carpentry cannot be offered by correspondence, nor are adequate facilities available in most small schools for work in commercial and vocational fields.

The Organization and Curriculum of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Secondary School

A completely different approach in providing secondary school education for native students from that followed by the Territorial Department of Education and the independent school districts in Alaska has been employed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. From the earliest attempts to provide secondary school education, it has been realized that language and cultural handicaps severely restrict many native pupils in purely academic fields. Therefore, without exception the Bureau of Indian Affairs schools in Alaska have provided some vocational training as well as education in academic subjects at the high school level.

In order to provide schools which are well equipped and adequately staffed for a comprehensive program including training for various trades as well as preparation for additional education, a larger enrollment is required than can be mustered in any individual native community. Therefore, all secondary schools established by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Alaska have been boarding schools.

At the present time, the Bureau of Indian Affairs operates only one high school in Alaska. This boarding school is located at Mount Edgecumbe, and during the school year 1956-57 it enrolled a total of 739 native students.[1]

Since Mount Edgecumbe is the only high school maintained by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and enrolls more than ten times as many native pupils as any other single high school in Alaska,[2] the operation of this institution will be considered in some detail. The school is fully accredited by the Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools and has a wide selection of course offerings. Subjects taught and class enrollments are shown in Table 18.

While the class schedule shows more courses of a vocational and commercial nature than are offered in any other secondary school in the Territory, it is not completely accurate to consider Mount Edgecumbe a vocational

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[1] Statistics Concerning Indian Education, Fiscal Year 1957 (U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Branch of Education), p. 15.

[2] Statistics furnished by the Alaska Commissioner of Education for the school year 1956-57.

TABLE 18

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM AT MOUNT EDGECUMBE HIGH SCHOOL* ACADEMIC AND VOCATIONAL CLASS ENROLLMENTS

Academic courses	Class enrollments	Total
English		
Freshman	34,34,35,36,30,27,21	217
Sophomore	38,21,39,40,27	165
Junior	35,29,19,18,12	113
Senior	35,37,38,29,13	152
Mathematics		
General	35,40,26,30,34,25	190
Algebra I	33,32,23	88
Algebra II	26	26
Plane Geometry	31,29	60
Science		
General	37,37,37,35,34,38,14	232
Biology	30,31,31,31,12	135
Chemistry	30	30
Physics	15	15
History		
World	43,35,39,22,13	152
American	36,23,13	72
U. S.	39,36	75
Alaska	36,21	57
Civics	32,36	68
Commercial		
Business Arithmetic	21,13,6	40
Junior Bookkeeping	15,14,11	40
Junior Stenographic Clerk	31,21,18	70
Senior Bookkeeping	16,8,5	29
Senior Stenographic Clerk	21,18,12	51

*Instructional Program, Mount Edgecumbe School, November 1956, Evaluation Report, Juneau Area Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs, (Mount Edgecumbe, Alaska: 1956) pp. 24-25

TABLE 18. (Continued)

Academic courses	Class enrollments	Total
Senior Mdse.	25,20,12	57
Fine Arts	26,25,24,23	98

Vocational courses	Class enrollments	Total
Home Economics		
Freshman	36,21,20,19,18	114
Sophomore	22,22,20	64
Vocations (Juniors and Seniors)	15,12,6	33
Shops		
Pre-vocational		
Arts and Crafts	25,25	50
Motors	19,21	40
Mechanical Drawing	20,20	40
Driver Training	12,10	22
Woodwork	16,20,23	59
General Metal	15,20,21	56
Vocational		
Carpentry	12,14	26
Cabinet and Mill	8,7	15
Gas and Deisel Engines	13,14	27
Air Frame I	12,11	23

school. Most of the vocational subjects are offered during the junior and senior years to students who elect such a program. For those students who indicate an interest in a more academic program, sufficient offerings are available for a typical college preparatory program of study with the one exception of work in foreign languages which is not deemed especially practical for native students -- most of whom are bilingual.

A basic question pertinent to all high schools is whether the education offered at these institutions make any difference in the lives of the youths who attend. Because the median grade completed by Alaskan natives as reported in the 1950 census was only slightly above the fourth grade,[1] an effort was made to determine the effects of a secondary school education upon the lives of those native students who did complete the course of study required for high school graduation.

A brief form was circulated by the school superintendent of Mount Edgecumbe High School to each of the 626 graduates to determine their present residence and employment status as well as the apparent usefulness of their high school education received at Mount Edgecumbe. As might be expected in any attempted follow-up of high school graduates over a ten-year period, the return was very small. Of the 626 forms sent to graduates only 136 replies were received. The number of returns was too small to serve as the basis for generalizations about the entire group of graduates. Nevertheless, certain trends emerged from those responses received.

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[1] U. S. Bureau of the Census, Seventeenth Census of the United States: 1950. Population, Vol. II, Sec. 51 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1953), p. 17.

Native students whose high school education takes place away from their home villages do not return in great proportion to the place of their birth. Only 38 per cent (51 respondents) are presently residing at home while 62 per cent have moved elsewhere. Adding considerable weight to these statistics is the fact that approximately one-third of the forms mailed to the home addresses of graduates were returned with the information that the whereabouts of the addressees were unknown. This fact implies not only that Mount Edgecumbe alumni are not returning to their home communities but also that the families of these students have moved away from these villages.

Considering the paths taken by those 136 graduates who responded to the inquiry, 18 per cent had continued to various colleges, and 23 per cent had taken further vocational training. Fifty-nine per cent had attempted no further education. While replies were incomplete in many instances, those pupils who were not in school at the time the inquiry was mailed showed but slight benefit economically from their high school education. Thirty-six respondents indicated employment which might be considered permanent, while 46 reported complete dependence upon seasonal work such as carpentry, fishing, and day labor.

Eighty-eight students had received vocational training at Mount Edgecumbe. Thirty-eight of these students are or have been employed in work relating to the specific vocational training they received. The highest correlation between training and employment was found for those students who received commercial training. However, these relationships between training and employment were difficult to determine, and as a result they are not completely accurate. For example, the Executive Director decided that training in diesel engines would relate to employment as a fisherman because most fishing boats utilize diesel engines. From the information supplied by the former students, however, it was not possible to ascertain what particular job the fisherman filled. Therefore, the work in diesel engines may or may not be related to the employment of the alumnus with training in diesel engines.

Actual salaries received by Mount Edgecumbe graduates employed on a full-time basis ranged from $1,121 to $8,000 per year. The median income received for full-time employment was $4,137.

The most revealing information resulting from the follow-up study of Mount Edgecumbe graduates came in the form of letters which accompanied the regular inquiries.

Over thirty unsolicited letters were received from former students who commented upon the strengths and weaknesses of their high school education on the basis of their experiences after graduation. The most frequently recurring response related to the felt inadequacy in English and mathematics on the part of former students. This response came particularly from those students who attempted additional formal schooling, although many who became employed directly following high school graduation also expressed the same opinion. The following quotations are excerpts from letters written by Mount Edgecumbe graduates and serve to illustrate this point:

"Through observation I find the [sic] most students who have graduated from Mt. Edgecumbe School have difficulty in mathematics and English. Please realize that I am not degrading the school as a whole."

"Have noticed, especially after working in Registrar's Office, English seems to be giving the graduates the most trouble -- more background in English would certainly help out."

"My opinion in bettering your school program for the benefit of students is more emphasis on English classes."

"May I suggest that more emphasis be put on English in delivering it to students. For instance, more original reports, an idea of the format of a research paper, etc."

"The only mistake I have made in high school is that I did not take an adequate amount of mathematics and English."

" . . . the Mount Edgecumbe graduates who plan on entering college are not fully equipped to cope with other students, hence their chances for utilizing their potentialities are lessened."

"Edgecumbe should sponsor a program encouraging public speaking."

Aside from occasional student reaction, the quality of instruction and actual course content at Mount Edgecumbe High School were not determined. Without doubt, however, the background of the learners must influence the level of instruction. Consequently, it cannot be assumed that these courses are equivalent in content and difficulty to course offerings in most non-native high schools throughout the Territory.

Inconclusive evidence of this fact was received from the study of native students attending Fairbanks High School. Nine of the 55 high school students in Fairbanks had transferred to Fairbanks High School from the school at Mount Edgecumbe. While the sampling is too small for broad generalizations to be made, there was a noticeable difference in marks received at Mount Edgecumbe High School and those received by the same students in Fairbanks High School. The overall average of marks received in Fairbanks by these students was 1.58, whereas the overall average at Mount Edgecumbe was 2.19. A two-point average in this instance indicates a "C" grade.

The Problem of Pupil Dropouts in Secondary Schools

High school entrance is attained by a minority of the native youth in Alaska. Graduation from high school is a rarer accomplishment still. An attempt was made to discover the per cent of eighth grade graduates from selected villages without local high school facilities who continued their education beyond the elementary school level. In most instances records did not contain this information; therefore, reliance had to be placed upon information supplied by school personnel and villagers. Table 19 shows the number of eighth grade graduates from these villages and indicates their careers after graduation. The periods of time for which this information was available varied with each village and depended in part upon the familiarity of the school personnel with the students and their families residing in the village.

Regional differences are apparent in that the statistics for communities in Southeastern Alaska, for example, show a greater per cent of eighth grade graduates continuing on to high school than generally occurs in other districts. In addition, the per cent of eighth grade graduates who enter high school is misleadingly high if it is interpreted to represent the proportion of elementary school

TABLE 19.

FOLLOW-UP OF EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATES

High school from which graduated, period reported	Total Number Graduates	To Mount Edgecumbe		To Sheldon Jackson		To other Schools		Stayed at Home		Moved to Other Towns		Miscellaneous[a]	
		Number	Per Cent of Total	Number	Per Cent of Total	Number	Per Cent of Total	Number	Per Cent of Total	Number	Per Cent of Total	Number	Per Cent of Total
Barrow 1950 through 1957	77	30	39	13	16.9			25	32.3	6	7.8	3	3.9
Hoonah 1956 through 1957	30	27	90			1[c]	3.3	2	6.7				
Hydaburg 1955 through 1957 (data incomplete)	24	7	29.2	7	29.2								
Kake[b] 1955 through 1958	35	18	51.4	11	31.4	2[c]	5.7					4	11.5
Klawock[b] 1955 through 1958	21	14	66.7	2	9.5							5	23.8
Kotzebue 1955 through 1957	59	44	74.6			5	8.5	9	15.3			1	1.7

[a] Miscellaneous includes dead, in penitentiary, no data, sick, moved to States.

[b] Klawock and Kake figures include 1958 graduates intending to attend Mount Edgecumbe at time of graduation.

[c] Juneau High School.

youngsters who enter high schools. Actually, eighth grade graduation is uncommon among native pupils in certain regions of the Territory. Detailed dropout studies for all native schools could not be made. However, the median dropout age at Barrow from 1949 to 1957 was sixteen years, and the median highest grade completed for the same period was grade six. Indications of early dropout among native elementary school students can be seen by the decreasing number of students enrolled in the upper elementary school grades. (See Table 20.) While increasing birth rates among native groups, decreasing infant mortality rates, and mobility of population all affect the total number of children found in any age group, the fact that there are only 40 eighth grade students in the Bethel region as compared with 213 third graders illustrates the existing tendency toward early dropout.

The problem of early dropout and the possible causes will be referred to in a later section of this report. However, it is important to understand that the eighth grade graduates represent a somewhat selective group who view the upper elementary school grades as preparation for high school entrance. Related findings were reported in a study of education in Puerto Rico in which it was discovered that education in this commonwealth tends to perpetuate itself. Apparently, according to these findings, the fourth grade is a crucial level after which those students

TABLE 20.

ENROLLMENT BY GRADE IN TERRITORIAL AND BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS SCHOOLS 1956-1957

District:	Beginners	Grade One	Grade Two	Grade Three	Grade Four	Grade Five	Grade Six	Grade Seven	Grade Eight	Total
Aleutian and Southern Coastal District		238	174	156	147	157	127	136	96	1231
Bethel District	263	271	246	214	153	143	76	49	40	1455
Fairbanks District	66	85	73	85	56	30	26	16	15	452
Nome District	128	232	176	190	190	132	124	92	87	1351
River System District		202	157	142	135	117	76	78	53	960

passing this hurdle develop new values and attach greater importance to education than pupils not reaching this grade.[1] Similarly in Alaska, the upper grade pupils represent an advanced group. Realization of this fact makes even more alarming the high dropout rate after high school entrance among these pupils who themselves reflect considerable voluntary selectivity.

An effort was made to determine conditions conducive to high school entrance and graduation as shown by the records of students who have enrolled in Mount Edgecumbe High School. During the period in which the institution has been in operation, records indicate a total of 2,155 native students enrolling in the regular high school. Special students studying only a few vocational subjects, pupils in the hospital school, and students in similar categories were not included in the study. Of the 2,155 students who have entered Mount Edgecumbe, 462 were expected to return for the 1957-58 academic year, and 1,693 (78 per cent) have already left the institution. A total of 632 students (29 per cent) have been graduated, while the remaining 1,061 pupils (49 per cent) have left school before graduation.

It cannot be concluded that all of the students leaving Mount Edgecumbe ended their high school education.

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[1] Melvin M. Tumin and Arnold S. Feldman, "Status, Perspective and Achievement: Education and Class Structure in Puerto Rico," American Sociological Review, XXI (August, 1956), 465-72.

School records indicate that approximately 11 per cent of the students who leave the school transfer to some other institution for various types of training. Parents of some of these students have moved to communities having local high schools enabling their children to attend a different school. In addition, under special circumstances, students from communities in which local high schools exist have been admitted to Mount Edgecumbe High School.[1] However, these cases are exceptions to the general rule that students will be accepted only from communities in which public high school facilities do not exist. Overcrowded conditions have made exceptions to this rule less common in the past few years than previously. As a result, the vast majority of pupils who leave school either return to their homes where no high school facilities exist or accept jobs in other towns -- which again indicates termination of their formal schooling. Therefore, in the present study the term "dropout" will be used to denote those students leaving school before graduation, although, as noted above, this term is not completely accurate.

Tabulations and analyses of the inactive school records at Mount Edgecumbe reveal certain conclusive findings. Dropouts calculated by number of years that students were in attendance showed a strong tendency toward lack of initial adjustment to boarding school life and the high school program. From the total of 1061 dropouts, 683 (64 per cent) left school before their sophomore year, whereas only 110 (10 per cent) left during the senior year.

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[1] Enrollment at Mount Edgecumbe High School has been permitted in cases where the home conditions of pupils have been especially bad, where the local high school facilities are so overcrowded as to make questionable the child's admittance, or where special courses were desired which could be obtained only at this institution.

These statistics include all students who have left the school during the ten-year period in which Mount Edgecumbe has been functioning. But to give an accurate regional breakdown of the dropout problem at Mount Edgecumbe, students presently enrolled in school were excluded, since obviously it is not possible to determine in advance whether these pupils will be graduated or will leave school. For purposes of a detailed study of dropouts by geographical regions, therefore, data were tabulated only for students who had entered school during the period 1947-53. Assuming a normal four year progression, all students entering school during this six year period would have had sufficient time to finish school unless they terminated their education before graduation.

Geographical trends were found relating to the number of students entering Mount Edgecumbe High School and also to the per cent of dropouts as compared with those who have been graduated. Seven geographical areas were established which were believed to show a certain regional homogeneity. Tables 21 through 27 indicate the regions established, with individual communities included and the number of students who entered Mount Edgecumbe as well as those who left school before graduation.

An important factor relating to the number of students who entered Mount Edgecumbe High School and the per cent of graduates is the distance between the school and the home village. The largest number of students entering Mount Edgecumbe came from communities in Southeastern Alaska. This group also had the lowest dropout rate (56 per cent). The smallest number of students entered the school from the Arctic coast which is the most distant region from Mount Edgecumbe, and an exceedingly high dropout rate (77 per cent) was tabulated for this group.

Unquestionably the adjustment is great for an Eskimo student from the Arctic coast.who is forced to travel over a thousand miles to school, live in a completely foreign climate, and eat unfamiliar food. By contrast, the youth from Southeastern Alaska initially faces only the common problems of being away from his home and accepting a new routine.

One of the most striking associations discovered in the Mount Edgecumbe study pertains to the relationship between age and dropout. As the student's age upon entrance into the freshman class increased, the likelihood of his

TABLE 21.

MOUNT EDGECUMBE HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANTS AND DROPOUTS BY REGION 1947-1953

ALEUTIAN REGION

Town	Number Enrolled	Number Dropped	Per Cent Dropped
Afognak	12	6	50
Akutan	3	3	100
Atka	10	4	40
Belkofsky	2	1	50
Chignik	9	6	66.7
Clark's Point	2	1	50
Dillingham[a]	4	4	100
Egegik	5	2	40
[illegible][b]	1	1	100
Kanakanak	1	0	0
Kanatak	1	1	100
Karluk	15	9	60
King Cove	2	0	0
Kodiak[a]	14	11	78.6
Larsen Bay	3	2	66.7
Levelock	1	0	0
Naknek	1	1	100
Nikolski	5	1	20
Old Harbor	6	5	83.3
Ouzinkie	21	14	66.7
Pauloff Harbor	2	2	100
Pilot Point	9	6	66.7
St. George	6	2	33.3
St. Paul	13	8	61.5
Sand Point	3	3	100
Squaw Harbor	1	0	0
Ugashik	2	2	100
Unalaska	8	5	62.5
TOTALS	162	100	61.7

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[a] Communities in which local high schools are being operated.

[b] Communities in which no schools are being operated.

TABLE 22.

MOUNT EDGECUMBE HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANTS AND DROPOUTS BY REGION 1947-1953

ARCTIC COAST REGION

Town	Number Enrolled	Number Dropped	Per Cent Dropped
Barrow	26	19	73.1
Point Lay	4	3	75
Wainwright	9	8	88.9
TOTALS	39	30	76.9

TABLE 23.

MOUNT EDGECUMBE HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANTS AND DROPOUTS BY REGION 1947-1953

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

Town	Number Enrolled	Number Dropped	Per Cent Dropped
Beaver	1	0	0
Circle	5	3	60
Fishhook*	3	1	33.3
Fort Yukon	10	6	60
Galena	2	2	100
Kaltag	3	3	100
Kokrines	1	0	0
Koyukuk	1	1	100
Nulato*	2	2	100
Rampart	18	12	66.7
Ruby	10	7	70
Stevens Village	1	0	0
Tanana	9	5	55.6
Venetie	2	1	50
Wiseman	1	0	0
TOTALS	69	43	62.3

*Communities in which no schools are being operated.

TABLE 24.

MOUNT EDGECUMBE HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANTS AND DROPOUTS BY REGION 1947-1953

SEWARD PENINSULA AND COASTAL REGION

Town	Number Enrolled	Number Dropped	Per Cent Dropped
Bluff[a]	1	1	100
Candle	6	3	50
Deering	13	5	38.4
Diomede	1	0	0
Elim	5	3	60
Gambell	13	9	69.2
Golovin	5	4	80
Haycock	2	2	100
Kiana	6	3	50
King Island	1	1	100
Kotzebue	27	20	74.1
Koyuk	1	0	0
Lost River	3	2	66.7
Mary's Igloo	1	1	100
Noatak	9	4	44.4
Nome[b]	27	12	58.1
Noorvik	1	1	100
Point Hope	13	5	38.5
Savoonga	2	1	50
Selawik	1	1	100
Shaktoolik	4	2	50
Shishmaref	5	4	80
Shungnak	2	2	100
Solomon	2	2	100
Teller	10	5	50
Unalakleet	36	21	58.3
Wales	4	3	75
White Mountain[a]	14	8	57.1
TOTALS	215	125	58.1

[a] Communities in which no schools are being operated.

[b] Communities in which local high schools are being operated.

TABLE 25.

MOUNT EDGECUMBE HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANTS AND DROPOUTS BY REGION 1947-1953

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

Towns	Number Enrolled	Number Dropped	Per Cent Dropped
Anchorage[a]	9	8	88.9
Big Delta	1	1	100
Chenega	5	4	80
Chickaloon	1	1	100
Chicken	1	1	100
Chitina	7	5	71.4
Copper Center	8	6	75
Cordova[a]	5	3	60
Eagle	1	1	100
Eklutna	1	0	0
Eska	1	1	100
Fairbanks[a]	22	12	54.5
Glenallen	2	1	50
Kenai	5	3	60
Minto	5	5	100
McGrath	5	3	60
Nenana[a]	13	9	69.2
Northway	1	1	100
Palmer[a]	1	1	100
Salcha[b]	1	0	0
Salchaket[b]	1	0	0
Seldovia[a]	2	2	100
Seward[a]	4	2	50
Slaterville[b]	1	1	100
Standard	2	0	0
Talkeetna	2	1	50
Tanacross	3	3	100
Tatitlek	9	6	66.7
Tyonek	14	7	50
Valdez[a]	3	3	100
Wasilla[a]	1	1	100
TOTALS	137	92	67.2

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[a] Communities in which local high schools are being operated.

[b] Communities in which no schools are being operated.

TABLE 26.

MOUNT EDGECUMBE HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANTS AND DROPOUTS BY REGION 1947-1953

SOUTHEASTERN REGION

Town	Number Enrolled	Number Dropped	Per Cent Dropped
Angoon	32	13	40.6
Annette	2	1	50
Craig*	11	5	45.4
Douglas*	1	1	100
Haines*	5	5	100
Hoonah	42	20	47.6
Hydaburg	41	25	61
Juneau*	39	25	64.1
Kake	40	24	60
Kasaan	3	2	66.7
Ketchikan*	43	21	48.8
Klawock	18	13	72.2
Klukwan	5	1	20
Metlakatla	65	38	58.5
Mount Edgecumbe	1	0	0
Petersburg*	5	4	80
Saxman	1	1	100
Sitka*	21	13	61.9
Skagway*	1	1	100
Tenakee	1	0	0
Wrangell*	9	7	77.8
Yakutat	27	13	48.1
TOTALS	413	233	56.4

*Communities in which local high schools are being operated.

TABLE 27.

MOUNT EDGECUMBE HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANTS AND DROPOUTS BY REGION 1947-1953

SOUTHWEST REGION

Town	Number Enrolled	Number Dropped	Per Cent Dropped
Akiak	3	0	0
Aniak	5	1	20
Anvik	8	6	75
Bethel[a]	9	6	66.7
Crooked Creek	4	2	50
Eek	4	2	50
Fortuna Ledge	1	0	0
Holikachuk	2	1	50
Holy Cross[b]	1	1	100
Hooper Bay	2	2	100
Iliamna	1	1	100
Mekoryuk	7	4	57.1
Mountain Village	2	2	100
Napakiak	1	0	0
Nondalton	2	2	100
Nunapitchuk	1	0	0
St. Michael	5	4	80
Sleetmute	4	1	25
TOTALS	62	35	56.5

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[a] Community in which local high school is being operated.

[b] Community in which no school is being operated.

completing high school decreased. Table 28 shows this relationship for all students who had left school prior to September, 1957. Statistics include only those pupils entering the school as freshmen. Transfer students were not included in these tabulations. It can be seen that whereas 29 per cent of the thirteen-year-old entrants left school before the second year, 67 per cent of the nineteen-year-olds left during this same period. And while 47 per cent of the thirteen-year-olds were graduated from school, a mere 19 per cent of the nineteen-year-old students completed the school program.

No one cause can be given as the primary reason for pupil dropout at Mount Edgecumbe High School. One must look beyond the age at entrance and the geographical location of the student's home village. Quite probably a detailed case study of the students entering school at a relatively young age would reveal factors contributing to their academic success which are not in evidence in the cases of the older students. In general, the mere fact that a student has progressed regularly through the elementary school grades and is ready for high school entrance at the age of thirteen indicates a scholastic aptitude different from that possessed by the nineteen-year-old entrant. Numerous intangibles, such as desire for education, home background, and parental encouragement cannot be measured by an analysis of pupil records.

TABLE 28.

RELATION OF DROPOUTS TO AGE AT MOUNT EDGECUMBE HIGH SCHOOL 1947-1957

Age at time of entrance		Completed less than one year		Completed one year		Completed two years		Completed three years		Graduated	
	Total Number	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
13 years	34	2	5.9	8	23.5	6	17.7	2	5.9	16	47.1
14 years	170	19	11.2	46	27.1	30	17.7	14	8.2	61	35.9
15 years	310	26	8.4	80	25.8	50	16.1	27	8.7	127	41.0
16 years	349	31	8.9	99	28.4	67	19.2	24	6.9	128	36.7
17 years	242	31	12.8	74	30.6	45	18.6	27	11.2	65	26.9
18 years	132	26	19.7	46	34.9	30	22.7	5	3.8	25	18.9
19 years	86	22	25.6	36	41.9	8	9.3	4	4.7	16	18.6

While individual student folders for Mount Edgecumbe pupils contain a section listing reasons for withdrawal from school, most of this information had not been entered or was listed merely as "unknown." The following list indicates the reasons for dropout as recorded on the pupils' school records:

Reason for Dropout	Per Cent of Dropout
Choice	8%
Health	6%
Family Request	2%
Military	3%
Transfer	11%
Expelled	10%
Not given	60%

Several factors make these statistics practically meaningless. The difficulty in obtaining the true reasons that students leave school is enormous. Socially acceptable excuses are frequently given to cover more ego-threatening realities such as homesickness and inability to succeed at school tasks. In addition, the fact that 60 per cent of the dropouts gave no reason for leaving school weakens any generalizations which might be made from the tabulations. Interviews with native leaders and informal conversations with parents and students indicated that the fact that pupils are forced to leave home in order to attend high school was a definite cause for relatively few students enrolling in secondary schools and the early dropout among many who did. Some students eagerly anticipated the opportunity to leave home for school, viewing this as an adventure to be relished. But as Oliver found in a survey of the Bethel schools, many students who had gone to Mount Edgecumbe High School and to the denominational Sheldon Jackson Boarding School at Sitka had " . . . become too homesick. The dialects are usually different from their own, and so is the food. Southeastern weather is very different and therefore so is the clothing. Even the food is not the familiar diet, so when the youngster returns home for the summer vacation he refuses to return."[1]

These findings coincide very closely with information received from pupils, parents, native leaders, and school personnel from other communities throughout the Territory. Therefore, when these opinions are added to the statistical relationship found between dropout rate and geographical location, proximity of high school facilities does appear to be a major factor in the adjustment of native students who of necessity must attend school away from their home villages.

In general, the extremely high dropout rate of native students who have entered Mount Edgecumbe High School presents a serious problem. The fact that the great majority of students leaves school before completing requirements for graduation brings forth the question of the effectiveness of Mount Edgecumbe in carrying out the function which it was established to perform.

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[1] Ethel Ross Oliver, "Narrative Report of an Educational Survey Trip to Bethel, Alaska" (Survey made in conjunction with this project, February, 1958), p. 9. (Typewritten.)

Comparisons were made between the dropout rate at Mount Edgecumbe and other selected local high schools in which native students are enrolled. Admittedly, students living in larger population centers in which local high schools exist are in different environments and have different backgrounds from students whose homes are in small, remote, native communities. Nevertheless, it was believed that an indication of the effects upon student dropout of attending high schools away from home might be gleaned from such an investigation.

In the Fairbanks study of native students who are attending the public high school, inquiries indicated negligible dropout either between the eighth grade and high school or during the high school years. A complete follow-up as to the whereabouts of students who had left the Fairbanks High School was not possible, but informal questioning indicated that in most instances their departure represented a transfer to another school rather than termination of education.

Similar encouraging results pertaining to the dropout of native students in public high schools were obtained in Haines and Dillingham. In Haines, native pupil enrollment for the 1957-58 academic year was slightly less than 50 per cent of the total high school enrollment of 55. Only a small difference was apparent between the dropout rate of native and of non-native students. The school showed a good overall holding power for both groups. A follow-up of the Haines High School graduates since 1953 indicated that a little more than half of this group is native. Since 1950, a total of 15 students withdrawing from the high school have actually terminated their education. Ten of these pupils are natives and 5 are non-natives.

The Dillingham High School holding power was not as high as that found in Haines; however, it was considerably superior to that of Mount Edgecumbe High School. Records of 120 eighth grade graduates from the Dillingham elementary school since 1946 show that approximately 10 per cent of the students remained in Dillingham but did not enter the local high school. Of those students who did enter high school and who remained in Dillingham from 1946 to 1953, 28 were graduated and 18 left school. No follow-up study of students leaving Dillingham was possible.

Superintendents of schools interviewed in Sitka and Ketchikan where native students are enrolled in public high schools agreed that the native student population did not present a special problem but was accepted on individual merit by students and school personnel alike. No ususually high dropout rate for native pupils was noted by the Ketchikan superintendent, although the superintendent in Sitka related that there was a higher mortality rate among native students attending Sitka High School than among non-natives.

It should be reiterated that native students attending high school in population centers such as Dillingham, Haines, Ketchikan, and Sitka reflect different backgrounds from the average native students attending Mount Edgecumbe High School. Not only do the larger communities themselves offer a richer variety and background of experiences for native children than do the remote villages, but also the voluntary migration of natives into these centers appears to be a significant factor. In many instances, this migration occurs as a result of mixed marriages between native women and non-native men. Subsequently, non-native influences are present in the child's home environment which affect his academic success.

For example, 22 native students, 15 of whom are of mixed blood, were enrolled in Haines High School during the 1957-58 academic year. In addition, all of the 15 students of mixed blood are one-half or less native. Similarly in Dillingham, 41 students enrolled in the high school during the 1957-58 school year are classified as native. Yet all but 5 of these students are of mixed blood. By contrast, an analysis of the racial composition of high school students at Mount Edgecumbe revealed that during the ten years in which the school has operated approximately 50 per cent of the school population was full-blooded natives while the remaining 50 per cent was of mixed blood.

The inference should not be drawn that race determines innate intelligence or academic achievement. But without question, mixed marriages tend to create family situations in which English is spoken and non-native values and motivations are introduced in the home. These factors have seemed to influence the academic adjustment of the children attending school.

Findings in the Mount Edgecumbe study and conversations with native leaders, parents, and students point toward the lack of high school facilities near the pupils' homes as an important cause for the low per cent of native students who enter high school and for the high dropout rate discovered. In addition, the problems inherent in the boarding school situation are contributing factors. In reality, however, the problem is far more complex than one which merely concerns homesickness, the inability to adjust to boarding school living, or unfamiliar geographical surroundings on the part of pupils.

Availability and proximity of high school facilities, although very important and desirable, will not alone solve the problem of poor adjustment and subsequently high dropout rate among native pupils. In reporting her findings in the Nome study, Wilson states:

> Native students who entered high school usually dropped from enrollment in grade nine. Students of mixed blood remained in school longer and a higher per cent graduated, though many dropped from grades ten to eleven.[1]

A comparison of the dropout rate in the high schools at Nome and Mount Edgecumbe shows that a higher proportion of the total enrollment left Nome High School annually than left Mount Edgecumbe High School during the same period of time.

Mount Edgecumbe High School

Average Enrollment, 1947-57.	691
Average Number of Dropouts, 1947-57. . .	106
Percentage of Dropouts	15.35%

Nome High School

Average Enrollment, 1947-57.	56
Average Number of Dropouts, 1947-57. . .	11
Percentage of Dropouts	19.64%

Failure in school work, retention in grade, overageness, family background, and the rigid academic nature of the curriculum were all considered to be causes for the high dropout rate in Nome.

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[1] Alice S. Wilson, "The Acculturation of Alaskan Natives in the Public School at Nome, Alaska," (Unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Education, University of Alaska, 1958), p. 121.

Alaskan compulsory attendance laws are such that at the present time all high school attendance is voluntary -- not compulsory.[1] Therefore, the mere provision of school facilities is insufficient. Education must appear attractive to the student in order for him to attend. Nome High School appears to be a good illustration of the possible dangers inherent in providing small, rigidly academic high schools throughout the Territory. The large number of pupils who have not completed the purely academic correspondence courses provided in the pilot high school experiment already referred to is a further indication of the lack of success which may be expected of such a plan. Both native and non-native students want and need a variety of courses from which to choose and instruction which will be suitable for them in light of their aptitudes and interests.

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[1] The Territory requires school attendance of all children under its jurisdiction between the ages of seven and sixteen or until completion of the eighth grade, whichever occurs first. (The Compiled School Laws of the Territory of Alaska [revised edition; Juneau: Territorial Department of Education, July 1, 1957], p. 70.) Children under the educational jurisdiction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs are required to attend school until the age of sixteen, regardless of grade completed, if a Bureau of Indian Affairs school is operated within two miles of their residences. (Ibid., p. 71.) Translated into practice, all high school attendance is nevertheless voluntary, since no Bureau of Indian Affairs high schools are operated within two miles of the residences of native pupils (with the possible exception of native students who reside in Sitka).

Recent Proposals for the Expansion of Secondary School Facilities

Awareness of its inability to provide a suitable secondary school education for all native youth by means of the inadequate facilities at Mount Edgecumbe High School led the Bureau of Indian Affairs to schedule a conference in 1956 to discuss the problem with Territorial officials.[1] Following the Fairbanks conference, officials from the Bureau of Indian Affairs met with the Board of Directors of the Fairbanks School District to put forth a definite proposal for expanded secondary school facilities in Alaska. In essence, the plan called for the establishment of regional high schools in Barrow, Kotzebue, Unalakleet, and Hooper Bay. These schools would offer grades nine and ten and would be open to all students from the villages in which the high schools were established and from the smaller surrounding villages. Upon the completion of the tenth grade, those students showing academic aptitude would be enrolled in the regular public high school in Fairbanks where government-financed dormitories would be constructed and maintained.[2]

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[1] "Fairbanks Conference on Secondary Education for Alaskan Natives," Fairbanks, Alaska, January 10, 1956. (Mimeographed.)

[2] "Minutes of Special Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Fairbanks School District held September 5, 1956, at 12:00 Noon at the Travelers Inn, Fairbanks, Alaska," pp. 1-3. (Typewritten.)

Fairbanks-was believed to be a particularly suitable location for the development of this program in that it was near the University of Alaska and might ease the transition of native students who would later attend the University. Also implicit in the foregoing plan is the fact that integrating those native students with academic aptitudes into typically non-native public schools would have beneficial effects for both groups. This philosophy is consistent with the general realization that native students must be educated to live in a modern society, compete economically with non-native adults, and become accustomed to easy association with persons from different backgrounds.

Students who completed the tenth grade in the regional high schools but who did not show a particularly strong academic aptitude would have the opportunity of attending Mount Edgecumbe High School which would place more emphasis on training for the trades than is presently the case.[1]

The underlying concept inherent in the dormitory plan of providing a common education for all high school students regardless of race has considerable merit. Interviews with school personnel in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Ketchikan, Nome, and Sitka indicate that racial discrimination would not be a factor if such a scheme were realized.

As an example of integrating schools, T. J. Cole,

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[1] "Minutes of Special Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Fairbanks School District, September 5, 1956," p. 2.

Superintendent of Schools in Sitka, described the situation in Sitka following the closing of the Bureau of Indian Affairs school in 1947 when approximately 80 native students were placed in the public schools. At first some social segregation did exist. However, it disappeared completely after the first two years in which native students were enrolled in the public schools. Some non-native opposition to the integration was experienced. However, this resistance was not intense, and the joining of the two Sitka school systems was readily accepted by most community residents.[1]

Despite the advantages which may result from integrating native students from outlying areas into the predominantly non-native public schools of a community such as Fairbanks and the likelihood that the citizens of Fairbanks would accept such an arrangement, shortcomings of the plan can be seen. The provision of boarding facilities for students who would attend the Fairbanks high school and the vocational school at Mount Edgecumbe would not reduce noticeably the major disadvantages of the present boarding school arrangement being operated at Mount Edgecumbe. While there would be two boarding school sites -- Mount Edgecumbe and Fairbanks -- the choice as to which school a particular student would attend would depend upon the course of study he chose rather than upon the location of his home community. Therefore, the adjustments necessary for a student traveling from Southeastern Alaska to the winter climes of Fairbanks where fifty degrees below zero is not an uncommon winter temperature would easily be as great as the problem faced by pupils from the Arctic coast attending school in Southeastern Alaska. Distances traveled by pupils from their homes would not be changed drastically. Actually, considerably more high school students attending Mount Edgecumbe at the present time come from Southeastern Alaska than from any other single region. Transportation costs, therefore, might well be increased by integrating native students into the Fairbanks system.

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[1] Conversation with T. J. Cole, Superintendent of Schools, Sitka, January 1, 1958.

A second problem existent in the Fairbanks dormitory plan involves the school situation into which native students are placed. A danger exists that a minority of native students enrolling in a school designed primarily for non-natives would experience difficulties in achieving school success unless considerable flexibility were allowed. The public schools do not employ personnel experienced and qualified to work with special bilingual groups. The fact that the native child is likely to be overwhelmed by the unrealistic expectations he would encounter might result in academic failure, early dropout, unruly behavior, or other manifestations of unsatisfactory adjustment.

The phase of the plan which calls for a separation of students at the end of the tenth grade with one group attending an academic high school while the remaining students attend trade school is not in keeping with modern principles of secondary education. The increasing complexity of the American society calls for the deferment of specific training for particular occupations for as long a period as possible -- ideally to grades thirteen and fourteen. Increased attention should be given at the high school level to a general education which will offer a common background to all youths and will include prevocational and exploratory studies designed to assist the student in choosing his area of specialization.[1] The decision, therefore, made either by the pupil or the school at the end of the tenth grade as to whether the student is "trade school material" or should attend an academic high school is a grave one and is likely to be made prematurely. The restricted village background of the pupil and his own particular home environment will determine to a large degree the course which his future education would follow under such a plan. These determinants are not in keeping with the tenets of a democratic society in which the worth and ability of the individual determine his future rather than social circumstances.

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[1] These principles of specialized and general education as well as the description of a plan whereby diverse educational needs can be met through a community institute are presented in detail in the following publication: Educational Policies Commission, Education for All American Youth (Washington: National Educational Association, 1944), pp. 246-47.

An additional dissatisfaction with the dormitory plan relates to the restrictive nature of the facilities which would be provided. Mount Edgecumbe High School has an ideal capacity for approximately six hundred students. Necessity has forced the acceptance of over seven hundred pupils, but a crowded institution is the result. The Fairbanks School District in its meeting with Bureau of Indian Affairs personnel ruled that a maximum of 75 native students would be accepted in the Fairbanks high school.[1] Combining the number of students who could be accommodated both in Fairbanks and at Mount Edgecumbe, the total does not approximate the number of potential native high school students from communities in which facilities are not available. Present elementary school enrollments indicate approximately five and one-half thousand native students in this category. With bulging enrollments in the early grades, and, hopefully, decreasing dropout rates, high school facilities must be planned in terms of a two or three thousand student capacity if there is ever to be a realization of the ideal of the common school extending through high school for Alaskan native students.

The plan as presented by the Bureau of Indian Affairs was accepted by the Board of Directors of the Fairbanks School District.[1] In recent months, however, misgivings have developed in many parts of Alaska as to the efficacy of the scheme. At the present time, it appears doubtful that the arrangement will be implemented. Ryan concurred in this opinion.[2] Reduced appropriations have seriously curtailed the new construction program planned by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, including the building of the proposed regional high schools and the dormitory facilities in Fairbanks.

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[1] "Minutes of Special Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Fairbanks School District, September 5, 1956," p. 4.

In considering the present provisions and proposals for making available a secondary school education for native youth, such as the small village high school, the pilot high school experiment, Mount Edgecumbe Boarding School, and the dormitory arrangement, it is necessary to evaluate each plan in terms of the objectives of education which should be established for native high schools. Each type of organization implies the use of a certain curriculum. Certainly the correspondence high school and the small village high school restrict the number and breadth of the school offerings.

In addition to various types of data utilized in developing recommendations relating to the objectives and organization of native secondary schools, native leaders, parents, and students throughout the Territory were polled and information was obtained as to their expectations, desires, and present dissatisfactions concerning this important phase of education.

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[1] "Minutes of Special Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Fairbanks School District, September 5, 1956," p. 2.

[2] Conversation with James C. Ryan, Superintendent of Schools, Fairbanks, August 5, 1958.

Students from the high school and upper elementary school grades in Bethel and Nome cooperated in answering a simple questionnaire relating to their educational plans. While a tendency toward reporting what the examiner wanted to hear and choosing glamorous if somewhat unrealistic occupations was expected, nevertheless certain trends were noted. In Nome 118 pupils responded to the questionnaire. The native students showed considerably more indecision as to their possible life work than did the non-native students. In addition, the native pupils evinced a strong desire to start earning money as soon as possible. Approximately 50 per cent of the native students polled plan to leave school before completion. Home conditions appear to relate closely to the child's ambitions and aspirations.

Sixty-five students from Bethel in grades six through twelve answered questions relating to their future plans. All 65 students plan to finish high school. Forty-two stated that they would also attend college, while 20 were interested in additional vocational training. Three students were undecided about their futures. Preferred occupations covered a wide range with an emphasis on nursing and secretarial work for the girls. The boys' choices clustered around such areas as piloting and repairing airplanes and engineering.

Without exception, interviews conducted with selected native leaders throughout the Territory demonstrated unmistakable trends in their attitudes and aspirations toward key educational issues. Education was looked upon as an important vehicle for improving the present condition of the Alaskan native. Upon occasion, in fact, the attitude expressed appeared to show a rather naive and blind faith in the power of education to serve all purposes and solve all problems. The native people realize, however, that their economy has undergone a vast change. The hunting and fishing resources which served the people so amply in the past are no longer sufficient to provide for the increased demands which are expressed by the majority of the people. Answers to questions pertaining to objectives of education for native children reflected a strongly economic slant. Training or education is desired which will insure immediate and continued employment, a relatively high income, and personal prestige. Specific positions mentioned frequently by native leaders for which training might be provided include the fields of mechanics, heavy equipment operation, secretarial science, nursing, and, less frequently, teaching, the ministry, and medicine.

The majority of those interviewed expressed the opinion that when a pupil is graduated from high school, he should be prepared for employment. This attitude implies that specific vocational training should occur at the secondary school level. However, a less frequent, yet conflicting, opinion expressed was that the high school should provide an increased academic and general educational background and that specific vocations should not be taught until the post-high school level. A regional trend was noted with the latter viewpoint expressed almost universally in the Southeastern section of the Territory where the average level of education is higher than in the Coastal, Interior, and Arctic regions of Alaska.

The types of positions suggested for which native students should be prepared relate closely to the future economy of the State and the possibilities of stable employment. Leaders in the Copper Center area, for example, frequently mentioned the desirability of training for mechanics, heavy equipment operation, etc., — reflecting the road construction and maintenance work being conducted in that region, — whereas in Southeastern Alaska emphasis was placed on vocations relating primarily to the fishing industry.

The trend toward training for regional employment was supported by the attitude that it is preferable for children to be educated for jobs available in or near their home communities whenever possible. Not only do strong village ties exist which tend to offer security and identity, but the universal parental urge to have children near was shown in a number of conversations. However, a strong exception was taken to the proposition that the young people should be kept in the villages at all cost. A realistic attitude was apparent in the great majority of interviews. As a native teacher at Barrow expressed it, Barrow started as a hunting village where the animals from the sea provided food and clothing for a relatively small group of people. Now the resources have been reduced, the population of the village has increased to over 1,200 people, and the necessities of life have expanded to include many items requiring money. Therefore, some people will have to leave the village if increased employment opportunities do not become available in Barrow. Similar expressions were received from all sections of the Territory. If the village has little to offer in the way of economic opportunities, the young people should not only be allowed to leave but should be encouraged to do so.

Much speculation occurs concerning the future of various regions. A number of residents see undeveloped wealth in the form of minerals, timber, or tourist attractions which, when fully utilized, will offer a bright future with abundant opportunity for all. An equal number see the drying up or withering of their communities. An example of a rapidly declining village population can be found in the Southeastern fishing community of Klawock. In 1947 the school enrollment was approximately one hundred, with all indications of a stable population and possible future village growth. On this basis, a new school building was constructed at a cost of $380,000 to accommodate the current enrollment and provide not only elementary school facilities but provisions for high school classes.[1] During the last decade, however, an exodus has occurred from Klawock to Ketchikan, Petersburg, and other surrounding villages which left a school enrollment during the 1957-58 academic year of 42.[2] New classrooms are unused, and opinions expressed in the village indicate that an even further future depletion of the Klawock population is possible. Examples such as that at Klawock reinforce the belief that education for village life will not suffice.

In all instances, persons being interviewed demanded a higher level of education for native youth than is being achieved at the present time. Again, a regional trend was apparent, with higher levels of aspirations being shown in Southeastern Alaska where it was felt that some college, or at least post-high school training is necessary for the majority of students who show the ambition and interest to take advantage of educational opportunities which may be made available. In the Interior, Coastal, and Arctic regions, a more common expression was that a high school education should be attained by all, with college for the few who demonstrate academic aptitude. All persons interviewed indicated the desirability of education beyond the elementary school level -- by stating either the necessity for some high school education for all or for high school graduation as an absolute educational minimum.

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[1] Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1956, pp. 179-80.

[2] This enrollment figure is listed in Alaska Educational Directory, School Year 1957-58, p.22.

The major dissatisfaction with the present system of education in Alaska concerns the sparsity and location of high school facilities for native children. Strong sentiment exists for the establishment of high schools in or near the villages which would avoid the necessity of children traveling long distances from their homes to attend high school. This circumstance was considered by the interviewees to be one of the primary reasons for the low level of educational attainment among native students. However, the large dropout rate which was found in the elementary school grades and in such high schools as that in Nome show this explanation to be an oversimplification of the problem.

The discussion of locations of high schools for native students brought forth unrealistic expectations and conflicting desires in many instances. A strong desire for small, local village high schools which would offer a wide range of academic courses as well as vocational training in specific fields was frequently indicated. The feasibility of establishing a broad comprehensive high school in a village in which the maximum enrollment might be 25 was not recognized as being inconsistent with reality.

Related to the opinion that students should receive their secondary school education in their home villages was an unexpected complaint about the present boarding school arrangement. Numerous parents discussed the financial problems they face in sending their children away from home to attend high school and indicated that in a number of instances the problem of school expenses prevented students from going to school. The different types of clothing worn by students in school, spending money, and (until recently) transportation for those who could afford it taxed many parents to beyond the limits of their financial capacity. Recognizing the financial strain put on many parents by the education of their children, during the 1956-57 school term,the Bureau of Indian Affairs assumed the responsibility for transporting pupils to and from their home villages each year. However, even with the provision of free transportation, room, board, tuition, and books, parents whose children are attending boarding school estimated minimum expenses of three or four hundred dollars per pupil per school year. Costs at private denominational institutions are considerably higher.

A third major objection to the boarding high school concerned the relatively young age at which a child is forced to leave home in order to obtain a secondary school education and the type of supervision he receives while in school. Many tales have been told in the villages about the life students lead while attending boarding school. The validity of these stories is weakened by the conflicting criticisms. Several people interviewed by the Executive Director denounced boarding school life on the grounds that the routine is so regimented and strict that children are not allowed to develop initiative or a sense of responsibility. The other line of criticisms attacked Mount Edgecumbe High School as an institution in which there is so little discipline and supervision that the students are led into lives of debauchery. In truth, the supervision of over 600 adolescent students ranging in age from twelve to over twenty-one is an enormous responsibility. However, with liquor and immorality not uncommon in most villages from which children attend Mount Edgecumbe, it appears doubtful that students, while away from home, are introduced to vice which is unknown in their home villages. A few persons specifically favored sending children to boarding school in order to remove them from deplorable village conditions.

The last frequently voiced complaint about the public high school for native students at Mount Edgecumbe concerned the opinion on the part of many that the curriculum is primarily focused upon vocational training and slights the academic subjects. Despite the common feeling that high schools should give vocational training, numerous examples were cited of Mount Edgecumbe graduates who were not qualified for further academic education, or, for that matter, for entering a skilled trade because of inability to read well or to express themselves adequately in English. Parents making these complaints were not demanding less vocational education but rather that the high school do a better job of teaching the academic skills as well as of training for employment.

The criticisms directed at Mount Edgecumbe are not unlike those being received by all public high schools at the present time. Any comprehensive high school faces an enormous challenge in giving an adequate foundation to those students who will enter institutions of higher learning, as well as in providing terminal education for those who will not continue their education beyond the high school level. College preparation, however, can hardly be justified as the major function of the high school, particularly at Mount Edgecumbe where only a small minority of the graduates continue their education. For the majority this is the termination point. Nevertheless, the college preparatory group cannot be slighted, and this phase of the high school curriculum should receive careful attention.

An interesting example of dissatisfaction with the present boarding school arrangements for native students was found at Kake where one set of parents was supporting two of their children in Juneau at an approximate total annual cost of one thousand dollars in order that these children could attend Juneau High School. The parents were convinced that their children's attendance at a boarding high school would prevent future college success. The personal financial sacrifice, therefore, was being made. So great had been the desire on the part of these parents for adequate college preparation for their two children that they had seriously considered moving to Juneau or Petersburg in order that their children could attend high school in one of these towns. Only the fact that the father had a permanent job in Kake and would face the prospect of unemployment in the event of a move prevented such drastic action.

It is not accurate to give the impression that complete dissatisfaction was expressed toward boarding high schools. A number of those interviewed believed that leaving home broadened the horizons of the pupils and was a valuable educational experience. Definite advantages were seen in placing students in a situation in which they would be forced to speak English rather than retaining a strong reliance on their native tongues. As already mentioned, it was believed that in some instances home or village conditions were so bad that a change of any sort -- particularly one providing sanitary living accommodations, medical care, and a well-balanced diet -- would be beneficial. In addition to the expressed belief that removing children from restricted or unpleasant home environments was desirable, the well-equipped shops, home demonstration units, and business machine laboratories at Mount Edgecumbe High School received considerable praise.

Conclusions and Recommendations

A secondary school education is not commonly attained by Alaskan native youths. Lack of high school facilities is undoubtedly one of the major causes for this fact. In addition to the lack of facilities near the students' home villages in most instances, the boarding high school at Mount Edgecumbe is not able to accommodate all qualified students who apply because of space limitations. Approximately three hundred students who applied for admission to Mount Edgecumbe for the fall term of 1958 were rejected.[1] The figure would undoubtedly have been much larger except that in light of the known overcrowded conditions, many teachers discouraged student applications from all but the most promising few.

The proposition that a secondary school education should be placed on a restrictive basis and reserved for a select few is indefensible. As early as 1918, the influential Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education reported:

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[1] Conversation with James E. Hawkins, Area Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau Area Office, September 5, 1958.

> To the extent to which the objectives outlined herein are adopted as the controlling aims of education, to that extent will it be recognized that an extended education for every boy and girl is essential to the welfare, and even to the existence of a democratic society.[1]

This statement has come to be accepted as representing the educational philosophy of the enlightened American electorate.

Decisive changes in the Alaskan economy and the resultant cultural changes affecting the lives of Alaskan natives create a demand for a considerably higher level of education than is now being attained by native youths in order for them to cope with these changes. Recent economic surveys present disturbing statistics pertaining to the low income received and the lack of saleable skills possessed by the majority of adult natives. The Alaska Rural Development Board published the results of an economic study conducted in the Kotzebue, Noatak-Kobuk region in which it was stated that the annual unearned income (aid to dependent children, old age pensions, aid to the blind, unemployment compensations, Alaska Native Service welfare, and service dependencies) amounted to $791.58 per family for nine villages included in the study.[1]

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[1] Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education, U. S. Bureau of Education, Bulletin 1918, No. 35 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1937), p. 29.

While it is hoped that education will have broader benefits than mere economic ones, nevertheless, the unquestionable fact remains that the better-paying jobs require more education than can be provided in the elementary school grades. With the increasing complexity of our present society which demands added skills on the part of its citizens, the trend is toward extending secondary education in the United States to include grades thirteen and fourteen.[2] Certainly in Alaska, a high school education must be the minimum goal for native youth, with provisions for an even higher level of education wherever possible.

The native people themselves recognize the changes their economy is undergoing and desire preparation to meet the new demands which they will inevitably face. As Spicer states, "It has become something of a commonplace to say, 'People resist change,' but a generalization that has more facts to support it is the opposite: People accept change.'"[3] The Alaskan natives are accepting the changes occurring in their culture.

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[1] James E. Hawkins, *The Kotzebue, Noatak-Kobuk Region: A Preliminary Economic Study* (Juneau, Alaska Rural Development Board, December, 1956), p. 30.

[2] William M. Alexander and J. Galen Saylor, *Secondary Education: Basic Principles and Practices* (New York: Rinehart and Co., 1950), p. 190.

[3] Edward H. Spicer, *Human Problems in Technological Change* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1952), p. 17.

An important vehicle, therefore, for raising the present economic level for Alaskan natives exists in increased educational opportunities for all natives. As an initial step in improving the present level of native education, high school facilities must be provided which will be both attractive and available at minimum cost for all to attend.

No one plan for providing increased secondary educational opportunities for native youth emerges as ideal and acceptable to everyone. However, judging from information obtained from native interviews, conversations with educational leaders throughout the Territory, population trends, economic surveys, and educational research, revisions in the present plan are desirable.

First, drastic expansion of high school facilities must be planned in terms of a potential enrollment of three or four thousand native students which, assuming the necessary extension of a common schooling for all through the secondary school grades, is not unrealistic. These estimates include one-half of the native students presently enrolled in elementary schools in villages where no local high school is operated. Eventually, with a reduced dropout rate in the elementary schools, an even greater potential high school enrollment will exist. Realistically, however, for the next decade initial enrollments will not approximate this level.

Rather than continuing the operation of one large boarding high school, advantages exist in the construction of separate facilities in selected villages throughout Alaska where an adequate enrollment can be maintained. Based upon recent migration trends and increased economic development in specific areas, certain key villages suggest themselves as logical locations for the establishment of four-year regional high schools. Communities such as Barrow, Fort Yukon, Hooper Bay, Kotzebue, Unalakleet, and possibly other villages with stable populations approximating 500 or more, such as Hoonah or Angoon, are promising sites for the establishment of high schools.

These villages would provide a relatively stable resident high school population. Housing accommodations should then be provided for students from smaller surrounding communities where the establishment of local secondary schools is not feasible. Family cottage units show promise as living quarters for nonresident high school students and appear to be preferable to the provision of dormitories such as those which exist at Mount Edgecumbe.[1] Provisions for student housing should also be made in communities presently operating small-enrollment high schools such as Bethel, Dillingham, and possibly Craig.

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[1] In a conversation, Margaret Lantis described advantages resulting from placing students in surroundings such as those which would exist in supervised cottages or family units as opposed to the more regimented and impersonal dormitory life. Selected village families could serve as "houseparents" for students who would perhaps assume minor household responsibilities, yet benefit from homelike living conditions. (Conversation with Margaret Lantis, Social Anthropologist, U. S. Public Health Service, September 3, 1958.)

No general agreement exists as to the size of an ideal high school. The National Commission on School District Reorganization recommends a minimum enrollment of 300 pupils.[1] While initial enrollments in the suggested regional high schools would not meet the recommended minimums, there are reasons for predicting gradual yet steady growth, so that eventually these standards might be met.

There is a need for the realization on the part of teachers that all native students should receive a secondary school education and that facilities exist in order for this aim to become a reality. Such knowledge will have beneficial effects upon the elementary school programs and policies which in turn will reduce pupil dropout and raise secondary school enrollments. The recent awakening on the part of the native people to the value of education also provides added incentive for native youth to continue their schooling. And finally, high schools which are located near the home villages of the students will attract attendance and reduce the succeeding dropouts.

The foregoing recommendations are based upon the conviction that under proper conditions enrollments in these regional high schools will reach 150 to 300 students. In a school of this size, a comprehensive program can be provided which will offer college preparatory courses, commercial subjects, opportunities for vocational exploration, and perhaps actual work experiences. Such a plan appears promising only in the event that a wide variety of curricular offerings can be made available in the local high schools.

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[1] National Commission on School District Reorganization, A Key to a Better Education, (Washington: National Education Association, 1947, p. 11.)

Small regional secondary schools with enrollments of 10 to 50 students cannot hope to satisfy the demands of a diverse high school population. Inevitably, the school program is highly academic and suitable only for the minority of students who plan to attend colleges and universities. The Nome study presents evidence which indicates extremely low holding power for a high school which is primarily academic in emphasis as far as its native students are concerned.

As a first step, it may be feasible to construct only a few high schools in the very largest centers such as Barrow, Kotzebue, and Fort Yukon with accompanying housing accommodations for students residing in the surrounding areas. Subsequently, as enrollments grow, new schools may justifiably be built which will enable students to attend high schools in locations even nearer to their home villages.

Predictions of costs required to construct and maintain the high school facilities recommended cannot be made with precision in light of information presently available.

Estimates by the United States Office of Education of construction costs in Alaska are approximately $2,500 per pupil.[1] Actual building size must be based upon careful enrollment projections with provisions for expansion to account for expected school growth.

Ordinarily, the per-pupil operating expenses of small, separate high schools will invariably be greater than for a single larger unit. However, several factors tend to reduce the differences in costs which may be expected to occur. First, the resident student population would not require room, board, and transportation which is now necessarily provided at government expense for all students who attend Mount Edgecumbe High School. Transportation costs for those students attending high schools away from their home communities would be reduced noticeably in that by attending the nearest regional high school, distances traveled would be shorter.

Unavoidably, the per-pupil costs of operating regional high schools would be high. But whether they would exceed the $800,000[2] required for operating Mount Edgecumbe High School with its pupil enrollment of 739 during the 1957-58 academic year is questionable. Nevertheless, the more important, yet intangible, values which accrue from a higher level of education cannot be measured in dollars alone. The waste of human resources resulting from restricted educational opportunities will become more apparent to future generations than to the educational planners of today--but inevitably such waste will be costly.

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[1] Administration of Public Laws 874 and 815: 6th Annual Report of the Commissioner of Education, June 30, 1956, U. S. Office of Education (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1957), p. 79.

[2] Conversation with Max W. Penrod, Area Director of Schools, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau Area Office, August 19, 1958.

CHAPTER IV

POST-HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION FOR ALASKAN NATIVE YOUTHS

Among Alaskan natives the isosceles triangle might well represent the most accurate schematic conceptualization of the present school enrollment. A sharp falling off occurs during the upper elementary school grades which increases at the high school level until by graduation time relatively few students remain. From these depleted ranks of high school graduates only a minute percentage of the original elementary school enrollment continues its education beyond this stage.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs has conducted annual surveys of native students enrolled in institutions of higher learning since 1955. These statistics listed below depict the seriousness of the problem. And even the large increase in post-high-school enrollees listed for the year 1957-58 can be accounted for in part by the inclusion of students in the Mount Edgecumbe nursing school who were not counted in previous years.[1]

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[1] "Native Students Attending Institutions of Higher Learning, School Year 1957-58," Statistics compiled by John I. Eichman, Educational Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau Area Office, March 1, 1958. (Mimeographed.)

1955-56	54
1956-57	94
1957-58	157

A detailed breakdown presented by the Bureau of Indian Affairs shows that most of the 1957 students in educational institutions above the high school level for the year 1957-58 were enrolled in schools in Alaska and throughout the United States as follows:[1]

Attending Alaskan Schools

University of Alaska	32
Sheldon Jackson Junior College	12
Mount Edgecumbe Practical Nursing School	22

Attending Schools in the United States

Colleges and Universities	62
Vocational Schools	21
Nursing Schools	2
Business Colleges	6
Total	157

While initially, the large proportion attending colleges and universities as opposed to practical schools and trade schools appears to be a promising sign, further analysis shows a clustering of these students in the freshman and sophomore years, indicating what is possibly a serious dropout problem. More specifically, among the students enrolled in institutions of higher learning, herein defined as including only junior colleges, colleges, and universities, 51 students were in the first year of college, 26 were in the second year, 15 were in the third year, 5 were in the fourth year, and 2 were in graduate or professional schools.[1]

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[1] "Native Students Attending Institutions of Higher Learning, School Year 1957-58."

Native Enrollment at the University of Alaska

General concern over the rarity of native students in institutions of higher learning as well as known cases of student frustration and failure led to the initiation of a detailed investigation of the records of the native students who had enrolled at the University of Alaska through the 1957-58 academic year. Attempts were made to discover causal relationships between various elements in each student's background and academic life and his subsequent success or failure in university work.

The total number of native students who have enrolled at the University of Alaska is 77. Of this number, 10 have been graduated, 44 have left school before graduation, and 23 were enrolled during the spring semester of 1958. The study divided itself into three natural parts which were considered separately. The graduates, representing successful academic adjustment, comprised one group. Those native students who left college before graduation constituted a second classification. Pupils attending the university while the investigation was being conducted were grouped into still a third division.

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[1] "Native Students Attending Institutions of Higher Learning, School Year 1957-58."

Considering the 10 graduates, information was tabulated according to race, degree of blood, birthplace, and high school attended. These data are presented in detail in Table 29. The fact should be noted that only two of the graduates are full-blooded natives. Slightly more than 50 per cent of the group have one-half or less native blood. The interpretation is therefore made that the majority of those students successfully completing advanced academic training reflects the non-native influence resulting from mixed marriages and succeeds more readily in academic pursuits than do full-blooded natives. Less pronounced yet similar findings were apparent at the elementary school and secondary school levels.

No significant pattern emerged which tended to show a decided relationship between home village or high school attended and college success, although Bethel ranks high in both categories. No students from Mount Edgecumbe High School were graduated from the University of Alaska; however, the fact that the school has been in operation for only one decade limits the number of its graduates who could have finished a four-year college course. Eklutna, the government boarding high school maintained prior to

TABLE 79.

NATIVE GRADUATES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA

Race	Number	Degree of blood	Number
Eskimo	7	Full	2
Indian	1	Three-fourths	2
Aleut	1	One-half	4
Not known	1	One-fourth	1
		Not known	1
Birthplace		**High school attended**	
Bethel	3	Bethel	2
Dillingham	1	Dillingham	1
		Eklutna	2
Fairbanks	1	Fairbanks	1
McGrath	1		
Nenana	1	Nenana	1
Noatak	1	Palmer	1
Wales	1	Sheldon Jackson	1
Not known	1	Not known	1

Major department at the University of Alaska	
Education	5
Bachelor of Arts	3
Chemistry	1
Civil Engineering	1

Sex	
Male	7
Female	3

the establishment of Mount Edgecumbe, was operated from 1936 to 1947 with enrollments ranging from 112 to 302.[1] Two University graduates completed their high school work at this institution.

Students who have left the University before completion of their programs of study comprise the largest classification by a noticeable margin. An informal follow-up indicated that a few of the students had entered other colleges after leaving the University of Alaska. For most, however, their departure from the University of Alaska signified the end of their formal schooling.

Two significant facts emerge when the records of those students who dropped out of college were analyzed. First, 23 of the 44 students leaving school did not reach the sophomore level. Second, only 13 of the 44 departing students had maintained a minimum grade point average of "C" or higher during their time at the University.

Both of these facts point to an extremely poor adjustment on the part of the native students during the early stages of their college careers. There is an interrelationship between academic adjustment and social adjustment which makes the separation of these areas impossible. Whether the students' low marks resulted from homesickness, unfamiliar surroundings, inability to make [illegible]ds, or inability to do acceptable academic work cannot be determined. However, the low overall achievement of this group is an important factor relating to dropout.

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[1] Statistics furnished by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau Area Office, Juneau, Alaska.

A slight relationship was discovered between degree of blood and academic achievement at the college level. Of the 5 full-blooded students leaving the University, only 1 had maintained a satisfactory grade point average in his college courses. Students of mixed blood attained higher overall grade point averages. Complete information as to race, degree of blood, highest grade completed, and high school attended for those students leaving school before graduation is given in Table 30.

The third group comprised students who were enrolled at the University of Alaska at the time the study was conducted. Twenty-three students were in this category; however, only 10 among the 23 were maintaining grade point averages satisfactory for graduation. As in the other two categories, degree of blood appeared to relate to the academic success of these pupils. Seven of the students enrolled during the spring semester of 1958 were more than one-half native, and only 1 was maintaining an overall academic grade point average of "C" or higher. Nine of the remaining 16 enrollees were doing satisfactory academic work as represented by a "C" average.

As in the case of the graduates, no noticeable relationship was found between high schools attended by the

TABLE 30.

NATIVE STUDENTS WHO HAVE LEFT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA PRIOR TO GRADUATION

Race	Number	Degree of Blood	Number
Eskimo	24 (7)*	Full	5 (1)
Indian	13 (3)	Three-fourths	10 (4)
Aleut	3 (2)	One-half	14 (4)
Not Known	4 (1)	One-fourth	10 (3)
		Not known	5 (1)
High schools attended			
Mount Edgecumbe	17 (4)	Haines	1
Fairbanks	4 (1)	Juneau	1 (1)
Nome	4 (2)	Kotzebue	1
Bethel	3 (1)	Palmer	1
Kodiak	3	San Francisco H. S.	1
Dillingham	2 (1)	Seward	1
Holy Names, Seattle	2	Sheldon Jackson	1
Pius X	2	Univ. of Neb. Corr.	1 (1)
Cordova	1	West Seattle H. S.	1 (1)
Eklutna	1	White Mountain	1 (1)

Highest grade completed

Senior	0
Junior	3 (1)
Sophomore	6 (5)
Freshmen	16 (5)
One semester	9 (2)
Less than one semester	10

*Numbers in parentheses indicate students maintaining an over-all grade point average of "C" or higher at the University of Alaska.

native students in residence and their academic success. Among students attending the University, 12 of the 23 had been graduated from Mount Edgecumbe High School. Five of these 12 were doing satisfactorily. Two students from Anchorage, 2 from Nome, 1 from Haines, and 1 from Sitka were in attendance; yet none of these students was maintaining a "C" average. Conversely, 2 graduates from Fairbanks, 2 from Juneau, and 1 from Dillingham were all achieving well. It was concluded that the enrollees from any single high school were too few to justify generalizations. Detailed information is itemized in Table 31 for those students enrolled at the University of Alaska during the spring semester of 1958.

Considering the entire group of 76 native students who have enrolled at the University of Alaska and have been graduated, have left school before graduation, or have remained in attendance, certain facts were discovered. Specific subjects presented hurdles which were in most instances insurmountable. English, as might be expected, was the single area in which the majority of students encountered difficulties. Thirty-nine of the 77 pupils had received lower than average grades in this subject. Fourteen of the 29 students from Mount Edgecumbe High School had received failing grades in English. And 6 of the 10 graduates of the University of Alaska had received grades of "D" and "F" in this subject.

TABLE 31.

NATIVE STUDENTS ENROLLED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SPRING SEMESTER 1958

Race		Degree of blood	
Eskimo	10 (5)*	Full	5 (1)
Indian	5 (1)	Three-fourths	2
Aleut	1 (1)	One-half	10 (5)
Thlingit	5 (2)	One-fourth	6 (4)
Not Known	2 (1)	Not known	0
High school attended			
Mount Edgecumbe	12 (5)	Nome	2
Anchorage	2	Dillingham	1 (1)
Fairbanks	2 (2)	Haines	1
Juneau	2 (2)	Sitka	1
Class standing at the University of Alaska			
Senior	0	Freshman	13 (6)
Junior	1 (1)	One semester	5 (1)
Sophomore	2 (2)	Less than one semester	2

*Numbers in parentheses indicate students maintaining an over-all grade point average of "C" or higher at the University.

The second most troublesome academic area for native students was mathematics, although accurate comparisons cannot be made between English and mathematics because mathematics is not a required subject for students in all departments. Therefore, while all University entrants are required to take English, it is possible for students who are aware of their weaknesses in mathematics to avoid exposure to this subject in many instances. Even so, transcripts indicated that for those pupils attempting mathematics, grades often reflected lack of success in this area.

The findings of the study of native students who have enrolled at the University of Alaska warrant certain conclusions and recommendations. The relatively few Alaskan natives who have entered the Territorial University and the extremely small percentage who have been graduated is more than sufficient cause for concern. In light of the predicted changes which will occur in Alaska, the need for enlightened leadership among natives has never been greater. The responsibility for preparing qualified natives through education to assume these leadership roles does not belong to any one agency but rather is a responsibility which must be shared. It is too simple a solution to blame the high schools for providing students with inadequate college preparation while in turn the high schools deride the elementary school for having low academic standards.

Education must be designed at all levels to satisfy the demands placed upon it by the diverse interests and educational plans of its students. While college preparation cannot be justified as the major role of the high school, and certainly not of the elementary school, nevertheless it is a function which must not be ignored in planning an effective public school curriculum for Alaskan students. As stated in the Thirty-Sixth Yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators:

> The secondary school curriculum, after a long period of relative independence from the requirements of higher education, appears to be entering upon a period in which it must necessarily draw closer to college requirements if it is to serve the needs of a school population in which a large percent will be college oriented.[1]

The number of Alaskan natives who will proceed to colleges and universities will not, for some time, approximate the proportion of non-native youth throughout the United States and Alaska who will attend institutions of higher learning. Yet, an adequate background must be given to those who will seek advanced education.

Overall weaknesses on the part of native college students in the areas of English and mathematics argue for a strengthening of these fields at the secondary school level -- at least for those students who aspire toward additional education. To this end, a new position has been created and filled at Mount Edgecumbe High School wherein a principal was appointed in 1958 to coordinate and strengthen the academic offerings at this institution.

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[1] American Association of School Administrators, The High School in a Changing World, Thirty-Sixth Yearbook (Washington: National Education Association, 1958), p. 172.

Preparation at the elementary school and high school which will enhance the probability that the entering native freshmen can meet university standards is a goal for which all school personnel should strive. However, the university cannot escape its responsibility in the area of native education. Despite outstanding instruction in the public schools, it is doubtful that bilingual students from primitive home environments can have overcome completely all vestiges of their verbal, and possibly social, handicaps by the time they reach college entrance age. While there are minimum standards demanded by various professions for which training at the University of Alaska is offered, it is the obligation of the institution to help students meet these standards rather than merely to serve as a tribunal for passing judgment on the abilities of entering freshmen.

Instruction must be evaluated for its effectiveness in dealing with native student problems. Based upon the difficulty experienced by most native students in the area of language, the appropriateness of the present remedial English sections is questionable. The typical dissection of sentences into parts of speech, memorization of punctuation rules, and workbook exercises may well be inefficient as a method of helping bilingual students to become proficient in English. The feasibility of utilizing techniques

developed in teaching English as a second language should be explored. Quite possibly, such instruction should replace the regular Freshman English requirements in cases where a language handicap traced to a culturally foreign background is determined.

In recognition of the problem that native students face in English courses, the University of Alaska is experimenting at the present time with a special section comprising remedial English students revealing especially pronounced language handicaps.[1]

In addition to investigating causes for academic failure on the part of native students, attention must also be given to the social adjustment of these pupils. Frequently, students whose secondary school instruction was received in small rural schools or in the boarding school at

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[1] Twenty-two freshman students who showed a severe weakness in English were selected for special instruction. The selection was based upon grades received on initial examinations, a written theme, and the judgment of the regular English teacher after a week's instruction. Students from foreign backgrounds other than Alaskan native were placed in the class to help dispel any stigma which might be attached by the student to his being assigned to a "remedial class for natives." Volunteer instructors for the section include Laura Jones, University Registrar and former Educational Specialist for the Bureau of Indian Affairs; Charles Keim, Associate Professor of Journalism; Charles Ray, Associate Professor of Education; and Kenneth Young, Dean of the Faculty at the University of Alaska. While some experimentation with techniques of teaching English as a second language may be employed where feasible, the major emphasis will be upon individualized instruction which is possible with a favorable student-teacher ratio of approximately five to one which presently exists. Evaluation of the experiment is not possible at this time.

Mount Edgecumbe are known to have difficulty adjusting to a different life at the University of Alaska -- characterized by relative independence yet considerable responsibility for maintaining an energetic work schedule.

Two new staff additions trained in student personnel work are in key positions to establish early rapport with native students having difficulty adjusting to university life. These expanded student services should help to reduce the number of dropouts caused by lack of personal adaptation to the college routine.

In general, an important cause for poor pupil adjustment in college relates to insufficient financial resources for meeting necessary school expenses. Individual case histories at the University of Alaska indicate that this problem has been an important reason for a number of native students having to leave school.

With the realization that most native students cannot finance their college education independently nor expect substantial help from their families, the Bureau of Indian Affairs for many years has maintained a fund for this purpose. In the past two years, the number of grants made has been significantly increased.[1] Financial aid made available to these students is not restricted to college entrants only but can be given to persons seeking any approved post-high-school education.

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[1] John I. Eichman, (comp.), Horizons: Higher Education for Alaska Natives, U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Branch of Education (Juneau: Juneau Area Office, 1958), p. 2.

In addition to funds provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs for post-high-school education, the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska offers up to ten scholarships annually for native students who are qualified and who desire to attend the University of Alaska. Minimum assistance is given and is granted only to those students unable to obtain a higher education without aid. In no instance will the assistance exceed fees, room, and board.[1]

Despite the increasing number of grants made each year, the need on the part of the native pupils for financial aid for post-high-school training is not being satisfied. To spread the assistance as far as possible, the Bureau of Indian Affairs official administering their program has suggested that individual grants made by this agency be limited to approximately $400 per year. But even assuming that the student has profitable summer employment and part-time work during the academic year, this amount still does not insure him adequate funds with which to meet school expenses.

Education is a sound investment. Money spent for raising the level of education of Alaskan natives will be repaid many times over in helping to increase their future usefulness to society, their ability to pay higher taxes, and, more negatively, in reducing their possible dependence upon public assistance. A recent report referring specifically to the secondary schools but appropriate in the field of post-high-school training points out:

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[1] Compiled School Laws of the Territory of Alaska, Revised edition (Juneau: Territorial Department of Education, July 1, 1957), p. 86.

> We do not say as strongly or as often as we should that the funds devoted to education are not expenditures at all, except in the narrow sense of technical accounting practice. These outlays are in fact long-range contributions to our chief capital account, investments against which no depreciation need ever be taken, for with wise management these funds compound themselves indefinitely.[1]

Conclusions and Recommendations

Relatively few Alaskan natives receive post-high-school education. Those who do enter institutions offering training beyond the secondary school level do not succeed for the most part in completing the program of work which they attempt. According to Bureau of Indian Affairs statistics, the majority of students enrolled in post-high-school institutions in 1957-58 was in colleges and universities, while those attempting specialized or vocational training represented a minority group.

The low success rate of native students who have entered colleges and universities points toward certain inevitable conclusions. First, the elementary and secondary school curricula must be designed to provide a stronger academic background than is generally found in native schools for those students demonstrating the aptitude for and interest in college work. This goal cannot be achieved by any one method but demands such varied elements as individualized instruction, superior instructional personnel, and family support which offers encouragement for the individual native child. At the same time, the holding power of the schools must be increased drastically to allow a number of qualified students to enter institutions of higher learning who now terminate their schooling at an early age for diverse reasons -- many of which do not relate to academic aptitude or ability. The problem of the holding power of schools is extremely complex. However, findings show a relationship between pupil dropout and overageness in grade, scholastic failure, and home background in addition to various factors already considered in this report. Additional problems relating to dropout will be discussed in greater detail in a later section of this study.

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[1] American Association of School Administrators, The High School in a Changing World, p. 346.

Despite the need for the schools to provide an adequate background for an increasing number of students who will enter college, post-high-school training should not be restricted to institutions of higher learning. More emphatically, there is a great need for advanced training which is not offered in colleges and universities but which cannot and should not be given in the secondary schools.

Various plans for providing vocational training have been attempted throughout the United States and by the Federal government in Alaska. The controversies as to when specialized training should begin and how much general education can be sacrificed have never been resolved to the satisfaction of most authorities in the field. Inevitably, however, in looking to the future of a rapidly developing State and the generally increasing complexity of our society as a whole, the incontestable fact emerges that students today need more general education and more specialization than was required a generation, or even a decade, ago.

David Sarnoff, in predicting what the citizens of 1980 will require, reaches the conclusion that:

> Automation and other aspects of scientific advance will, as a matter of course, put a premium on brains rather than brawn. Even now, in America, illiteracy has become more of a handicap in life than most physical handicaps. The demands for mental competence will be vastly enlarged. One hopes that by 1980 a decent education (though I recognize that no two of us will agree on definitions here) will have become as indispensable as a decent suit of clothes.[1]

Therefore, while vocational exploratory courses, work experience, and careful guidance should be afforded students in the upper high school grades to increase the period for general education, major provisions for specialized vocational training should be provided at the post-high-school level. The 1958 Yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators describes the following plan for vocational training:

> A fifth plan is to conduct no vocational education requiring extensive shop or laboratory

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[1] David Sarnoff, "The Fabulous Future," The Fabulous Future: America in 1980 (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1955), p. 21.

> training at the high school level. Trade and industrial courses which meet acceptable standards are postponed until after high-school graduation and then obtained in post-high-school area vocational schools, community colleges, or technical institutes.
>
> Proponents of . . . [this plan] usually maintain that good programs of industrial arts in the upper years of high school are desirable. Specialized one-hour-period unit courses in industrial arts at this level have definite pre-vocational implications and are effective orientation programs for trade training at the post-high-school level. These advocates believe it is too expensive to equip trade shops in high schools. They also believe that students need more time to make a vocational choice and that the period in which we live requires more time for basic general education for successful living.
>
> . . . .
>
> With trade technical programs becoming more prevalent because of the need for trade technicians in the chemical industry, in electronics, and in automation, it is anticipated that trade and industrial education offerings patterned after this plan will increase thruout the country.[1]

Such a plan as described fits itself particularly well to the regional high school organization which was recommended in the previous chapter. The high schools in the larger native villages could not provide adequately equipped trade shops which would serve the purposes of a varied group of high school youth with diverse aspirations and aptitudes. Additionally, the restricted backgrounds of many native students argue strongly for a longer period in which general education is provided and increased opportunities for vocational exploration exist.

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[1] American Association of School Administrators, The High School in a Changing World, p. 108.

With the exception of Mount Edgecumbe High School, few facilities are maintained within the Territory which offer technical or vocational training. The creation of new facilities and the expansion of existing facilities are imperative. Two or three well-equipped centers for specialized training should be located in selected towns such as Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau or Ketchikan.

The exact nature of the training and location of the site would be determined by a careful analysis of labor demands of important employing companies and industries operating in the Territory. Representatives from the aircraft industry, for example, informed officials of the Bureau of Indian Affairs that because of the problem of a high turnover rate among key personnel they would give preference to Alaskan natives in their hiring practices, assuming the possession by these natives of an adequate amount of training and skill.[1] Similar statements have been made by employing officials of the Federal Electric Corporation who are responsible for the manning of the DEW (Distant Early Warning) Line sites scattered throughout the remote and isolated regions of Alaska.

Skilled laborers and technicians are imported annually for major construction work in Alaska. Such positions could be filled by local residents and native personnel whose training qualified them for these specific positions. Employment opportunities relating to the fishing industry also exist which are often filled by seasonal workers from outside the Territory.

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[1] Conversation with Max W. Penrod, Area Director of Schools, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau Area Office, May 29, 1957.

Each vocational training center might offer instruction in different skills related to employment demands in that particular section of Alaska. For example, Juneau or Ketchikan afford ideal locations for specialized training for personnel engaged in various aspects of the fishing industry. Fairbanks, a major transportation center and the northernmost major city in the Territory, lends itself especially well to the location of a training center for persons who might be employed in the airline industry or in operating the DEW Line sites. Anchorage, the largest city in Alaska, might well serve as a training center for those to be engaged in construction, heavy equipment operation, and clerical work. Additional types of training should be provided as the need for these skills becomes apparent.

Provisions for specialized training should be open to all qualified students at minimum or no cost to the participants. Boarding facilities would be required. However, many of the objections to boarding high schools dissolve when applied to an older post-high-school group. Work experience might provide an essential part training program. Such du fray

In summary, advanced education is a sound investment. Through increased educational attainment, Alaskan natives can develop pride in accomplishment, economic independence, and necessary confidence that the future holds promise and opportunity for all its citizens.

CHAPTER V

MAJOR PROBLEMS IN ALASKAN NATIVE EDUCATION

During the period in which the present study was being conducted, specific interrelated problems were discerned which have deleterious effects upon the program of education for Alaskan natives. As mentioned in earlier sections of the report, the median level of education attained by native students is low, and the general holding power of native schools is poor. In fact, an NEA publication reports that, in general, Alaska has a lower percentage of its school age children (5 through 17 years) enrolled in schools than any of the 48 states or Hawaii.[1]

Overage Students

The problem of students being far above age for their grade placement attracted early attention in the study. Statistics obtained from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Territorial Department of Education provided complete age-grade information for native schools for the 1956-57 academic year. Table 32 gives a composite picture of age-grade distribution in native schools operated by both agencies. The total proportion of overage students was found to be slightly over 40 per cent.

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[1] Research Division, National Education Association (comp.), Public Education in the Outlying Areas (A Supplement to Educational Differences Among the States) (Washington: National Education Association, May, 1954), p. 9.

The overall per cent of overage students is high, yet analysis of data for individual schools shows considerable variation from village to village and among districts in the Territory. Appendix C lists the district divisions employed by the two school agencies and the schools included in each division. Age-grade information was tabulated by district (as was done in Chapter II in comparing test results of pupils in native schools) to show the regional variations. Tables 33 through 39 include these regional tabulations.

The overage problem is more pronounced in schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs than in Territorial native schools. A partial explanation for this fact is found in the Bureau of Indian Affairs practice of enrolling students in a pre-first grade, or beginners group, in order to orient them to school routine. Enrollment in this group ordinarily includes students of normal entrance age which automatically retards them a year by the time they enter the first grade. Additionally, a variation in entrance age requirements between the Territorial and Bureau of Indian Affairs schools allows students to enroll in Territorial schools at a slightly earlier age than is permitted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

TABLE 32.

AGE-GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS ENROLLED IN TERRITORIAL NATIVE AND BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS SCHOOLS IN ALASKA, 1956-1957

GRADE	AGE 5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	TOTAL ENROLL-MENT	NO. OVER AGE	PER CENT OVER AGE
Beginners		279	127	20	13	2	1	1									443	164	37.0
First	44	549	398	167	80	33	18	10	2	2		1		1			1305	314	24.1
Second		32	321	349	175	108	64	29	20	6	2	2	1			1	1110	408	36.8
Third		1	38	259	258	163	101	92	40	30	26	12		3			1023	467	45.7
Fourth			1	32	208	246	137	108	67	34	36	12	9	2		1	893	406	45.5
Fifth				1	20	169	193	152	90	54	37	33	14	3		1	767	384	50.1
Sixth				1		25	118	162	112	72	76	21	6	8			601	295	49.1
Seventh						3	21	140	121	111	85	39	13	3	1		537	252	46.9
Eighth							1	22	101	122	103	84	19	12	1		465	219	47.1
TOTALS																	7144	2909	40.72

TABLE 33.

AGE-GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS ENROLLED IN SCHOOLS
IN THE ALEUTIAN AND SOUTHERN COASTAL DISTRICT 1956-1957*

GRADE	AGE 5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	TOTAL ENROLL-MENT	NO. OVER AGE	PER CENT OVER AGE
First	17	174	45	8	7	3								1			255	19	7.5
Second		17	101	49	12	7	1	2	1			1					191	24	12.6
Third		1	20	80	40	14	10	7	1	2		2					177	36	20.3
Fourth				13	65	43	18	11	5	2	1		1	1			160	39	22.5
Fifth				1	11	62	39	25	14	6	6	4		1			169	56	33.1
Sixth				1		11	42	41	17	13	7	5		2			139	44	31.8
Seventh						2	7	55	32	24	13	5	6		1		145	49	33.8
Eighth								9	33	30	21	8	3	1			105	33	31.4
TOTALS																	1341	300	22.4

*Includes Incorporated District Schools at King Cove, Seldovia, and Unalaska.

TABLE 34.

AGE-GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS ENROLLED IN SCHOOLS
IN THE BETHEL DISTRICT, 1956-1957

GRADE	AGE 5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	TOTAL ENROLL-MENT	NO. OVER AGE	PER CENT OVER AGE
Beginners		141	92	15	11	2	1	1									263	122	46.4
First		9	93	77	49	22	14	5		1		1					271	169	62.4
Second			5	50	66	50	41	15	13	2	2	1					245	190	77.6
Third				3	23	43	36	41	22	19	19	6		1			213	187	87.8
Fourth					3	16	32	22	29	19	26	4	2				153	134	87.6
Fifth						4	13	39	22	20	16	15	12	1			142	125	88.0
Sixth							3	5	13	15	30	5	3	3			77	69	89.6
Seventh								3	4	12	17	8	4	1			49	42	85.7
Eighth									1	3	13	13	6	5			41	37	90.2
TOTALS																	1454	1075	73.9

TABLE 35.

AGE-GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS ENROLLED IN SCHOOLS
IN THE FAIRBANKS DISTRICT, 1956-1957

GRADE	AGE 5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	TOTAL ENROLL-MENT	NO. OVER AGE	PER CENT OVER AGE
Beginners		36	8	1	1												46	10	21.7
First		31	34	16	4			1	1								87	22	25.3
Second		1	13	35	12	7	4	1	1								74	25	33.8
Third				14	28	13	13	9	6	1	4	3		2			93	51	54.8
Fourth				1	10	13	7	14	6	4		2	2	1			60	36	60.0
Fifth					1	3	10	5	7	5	1	3	1	1			37	23	62.2
Sixth							2	6	7	4	4	2	1	1			27	19	70.4
Seventh									6	6	2	2					16	10	62.5
Eighth										2	8	4		1			15	13	86.7
TOTALS																	455	209	45.9

TABLE 36.

AGE-GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS ENROLLED IN SCHOOLS
IN THE NOME DISTRICT, 1956-1957

GRADE	AGE 5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	TOTAL ENROLL-MENT	NO. OVER AGE	PER CENT OVER AGE
Beginners		93	26	4	1												124	31	25.0
First		75	90	40	14	5	3	3		1							231	66	28.6
Second		1	48	61	32	23	7	7	3								182	72	39.6
Third			2	49	48	39	23	16	2	5	1						185	86	46.5
Fourth				8	37	61	31	35	14	6	6	2	2				202	96	47.5
Fifth						18	41	36	19	9	6	4	1				134	75	56.0
Sixth							9	43	32	20	13	5	1	1			124	72	58.1
Seventh							1	11	26	23	20	13					94	56	59.6
Eighth								1	10	23	30	16	6	3			89	55	61.8
TOTALS																	1365	609	44.6

TABLE 37.

AGE-GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS ENROLLED IN SCHOOLS IN THE RIVER SYSTEM DISTRICT, AND THE ROAD AND RAIL BELT DISTRICT, 1956-1957

GRADE	AGE 5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	TOTAL ENROLL-MENT	NO. OVER AGE	PER CENT OVER AGE
First	23	125	53	17	3	3		1									225	24	10.7
Second		10	69	39	21	11	7	2	2	4			1			1	167	49	29.3
Third			10	58	33	16	13	12	6	3		1					152	51	33.6
Fourth				4	43	36	23	14	9	3	1	4	1			1	139	56	40.3
Fifth					5	30	29	20	13	12	5	7				1	122	58	47.5
Sixth						6	23	14	11	10	14	2	1	1			82	39	47.6
Seventh							9	29	13	13	14	6	1	2			87	36	41.4
Eighth							1	7	23	12	11	5	1			1	61	18	29.5
TOTALS																	1035	331	32.0

TABLE 38.

AGE-GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS ENROLLED IN SCHOOLS IN THE SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT, 1956-1957

GRADE	AGE 5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	TOTAL ENROLL-MENT	NO. OVER AGE	PER CENT OVER AGE
First	4	62	22	1													89	1	1.1
Second		3	60	29	11	1											104	12	12.0
Third			6	37	32	16	3		1								95	20	21.0
Fourth			1	2	27	31	13	2									76	15	19.7
Fifth					1	25	23	7	5	1							62	13	21.0
Sixth						2	15	22	4	4	1						63	24	38.1
Seventh						1	2	24	21	9	8	2	1				68	20	29.4
Eighth								3	22	29	13	7	1	1			76	22	28.9
TOTALS																	633	127	20.1

TABLE 39.

AGE-GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS ENROLLED IN UNGROUPED SCHOOLS, 1956-1957*

GRADE	AGE 5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	TOTAL ENROLL-MENT	NO. OVER AGE	PER CENT OVER AGE
Beginners		9	1														10	1	10.0
First		93	61	8	3		1		1								147	13	8.8
Second			25	86	21	9	4	2									147	36	24.5
Third				18	54	22	3	7	2		2						108	36	33.3
Fourth				4	23	46	13	10	4		2		1				103	30	29.1
Fifth					2	27	38	20	10	1	2						100	33	33.3
Sixth						6	24	31	17	6	4	1					89	28	31.5
Seventh							2	18	19	24	11	3	1				78	39	50.0
Eighth								2	12	23	7	31	2	1	1		79	42	53.2
TOTALS																	861	258	30.0

*Includes schools at Barrow, Barter Island, Wainwright, and Nome.

While minor variations in operating procedures account for some of the differences in age-grade placement of students in Territorial and Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, the major causes for the extreme overageness found in specific regions cannot be explained in this manner.

Schools in Southeastern Alaska show the nearest approximation to normal age-grade placement with but 20.1 per cent of the enrollment overage. The Bethel district represents the opposite extreme with 73.9 per cent of the pupils being overage. In the Bethel district, the tendency for the per cent of overage students to increase as the grade level increases is well illustrated. In the first grade, for example, 169 out of 271 (62.4 per cent of the pupils) are overage, whereas in the eighth grade 37 out of 41 (90.2 per cent) are overage. The small number of eighth graders enrolled in the entire region illustrates the results of a high dropout rate in the elementary schools in the Bethel district which is believed to be associated with the overage problem.

To determine the most important reasons for overageness in native schools, a simple questionnaire was circulated to schools in which this problem seemed to be most pronounced. A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix H. Arbitrarily, schools in which 30 per cent or more of the current enrollment was overage were included in the survey. Ninety-six schools met this qualification. Sixty schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and 36 Territorial schools made up the group. Seventy replies were received for a 73 per cent response. Table 40 summarizes these responses.

Shortcomings are apparent in the method which is reliant upon the questioning of teachers presently employed in various communities about the problem of overage pupils in these schools. The teacher turnover rate in native schools is sufficiently high to justify the conclusion that many teachers "inherited" the overage situations in their particular locations rather than "creating" them. Nevertheless, the information possessed about villages in which they are presently employed and the educational philosophy of teachers working in these centers were felt to be pertinent to the questions being investigated.

Factors relating to age-grade placement over which the individual teacher has limited control were described by school personnel in numerous instances. Such practices as native families leaving the village during the school year, hunting and trapping seasons in which children are taken out of school, and apathy on the part of parents were all given as reasons for irregularity of attendance which in turn affected pupil placement. Fifteen of the 70 schools from which replies were received had been closed

TABLE 40.

FACTORS RELATED TO OVERAGENESS IN ALASKAN NATIVE SCHOOLS

Factors affecting overageness, in order of importance	Number of schools ranking first
Non-promotion	47
Irregular attendance	10
School closure	10
Late entrance	1
Combination of other factors	2
TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	70

Individual school practices	Yes	No	Uncertain
1. Schools having beginners or kindergarten level	41	29	
2. Schools closed within last eight years. (Average closure of 2½ years.)	15	55	
3. Schools requiring repetition of grade for failure to reach attainment levels	57	5	8
4. Schools in which irregular attendance affects grade placement	24	39	7
5. Schools from which pupils leave town with families during part of year	40	30	
a. Average number of pupils affected, 26%			
b. Average period of absence, 1.35 months			
6. Schools placing new or transferred pupils below normal age-grade level	42	11	17

for varying periods of time during the past eight years. A number of children from these schools had been sent to the elementary boarding school at Wrangell; however, many remained out of school.

Non-promotion represented the most important single cause for overageness as reported by the teachers polled. The single question asked on the age-grade questionnaire about non-promotion showed a propensity on the part of a majority of the teachers to hold students to certain academic standards before promotion occurred.

Promotion Practices

The questions arose as to what standards native students are expected to meet, what philosophy of pupil progress is held by teachers employed in native schools, and, in summary, what the major causes are for the high non-promotion rate which exists in native schools throughout Alaska.

A questionnaire was developed which contained queries relating to pupil progress, and a pilot study was conducted with the instrument. A copy of the questionnaire used is included as Appendix I. To broaden the sampling beyond those schools included in the age-grade study, the promotion questionnaire was circulated to all native schools in Alaska. From the total number of 140 forms distributed, 115 replies were received for an 82.1 per cent response.

Some conflict was found in the questionnaire responses; however, they reflected an overall consistency in promotion practices among teachers in both systems. Table 41 summarizes promotion practices as revealed by these replies. The term "majority" as used in the questionnaire was defined to mean approximately 75 per cent. An example of apparent conflict in answers received can be seen by the fact that 97 per cent of the Territorial teachers stated that they promoted the majority of students every year. However, only 50 per cent of the same teachers indicated that they promoted 75 per cent of the first graders at the end of the first year. Whether the first grade represents a different problem separate and apart from regular school promotion practices is undetermined. However, the number of native students who are overage in grade and who have undoubtedly been retained one or more years in grade indicates that the actual promotion rate is not as high as tabulated responses in Table 41 might imply.

Specific reasons for teachers promoting or retaining students were received in replies itemized on the questionnaire. Bases for promotion and retention were ranked according to frequency of response and are summarized in Table 42. Teachers' replies were separated according to their employing agency to determine whether marked differences exist between promotion practices in Bureau of

TABLE 41.

PROMOTION POLICIES OF ALASKAN NATIVE SCHOOLS BEGINNERS THROUGH GRADE EIGHT

Promotion practice	Territorial		Bureau of Indian Affairs	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
PROMOTION IN ALL GRADES				
Schools promoting majority of pupils to higher grade each year	60	97	39	75
Schools promoting majority of pupils every two years	2	3	11	21
Schools promoting majority of pupils every three years	0		2	4
PROMOTION FROM FIRST GRADE				
Schools promoting 100 per cent of first graders at end of first year	19	31	16	32
Schools promoting 75 per cent of first graders at end of first year	31	50	16	32
Schools promoting 50 per cent of first graders at end of first year	6	10	9	18
Schools promoting 25 per cent of first graders at end of first year	3	5	6	12
Schools promoting less than 25 per cent of first graders at end of first year	3	5	3	6

TABLE 42.

BASES FOR PROMOTION AND RETENTION IN ALASKAN NATIVE SCHOOLS

Bases for promotion or retention	Territorial	Bureau of Indian Affairs
	Rank	Rank
BASES FOR PROMOTION		
Average academic achievement	1	1
Achievement in reading	2	3
Achievement in understanding and use of English language	3	2
Effort of pupil	4	4
Innate intelligence of pupil	5	6
Social adjustment of pupil	6	5
Age of pupil	7	7
Other	8	8
BASES FOR RETENTION		
Lack of maturity to comprehend work	1	1
Lack of intelligence to comprehend work	2	3
Lack of effort	3	5
Lack of interest	4	6
Language handicap	5	2
Cultural or environmental handicap	6	4
Non-attendance	7	7
Curriculum not suited to aptitudes of pupil	8	8
To retain pupil in school	9	9
Other	10	10

Indian Affairs and Territorial schools.

Closely allied to reasons for promotion were the converse reasons for retention. As can be seen in Table 42, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Territorial personnel do not show noticeable conflicts in philosophy. The most decided inconsistency in replies relates to the importance of the pupil's language handicap in determining his retention. Personnel from the Bureau of Indian Affairs considered this factor second in importance after lack of maturity to do the work expected, whereas Territorial personnel considered language handicap only fifth in order of importance. Because, on the whole, Bureau of Indian Affairs schools have been retained in the more isolated villages where less outside contact occurs, it is understandable that less importance is attached to the language factor by Territorial teachers than by school personnel employed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Provisions for accounting for individual differences among pupils were found to be somewhat similar among teachers from both agencies. Replies from 34 Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, however, indicated that the practice of accelerating pupils was employed, whereas this practice was used in only 16 Territorial schools. Table 43 itemizes the provisions made for above-average and retarded children in native schools.

In analyzing replies from individual schools in which

TABLE 43.

PROVISIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN ALASKAN NATIVE SCHOOLS

Provisions made	Territorial		Bureau of Indian Affairs	
	Rank	Number of Schools	Rank	Number of Schools
FOR ABOVE-AVERAGE CHILD				
Year by year promotion; regular work supplemented by broadened enriched program	First	53	First	43
Academic skills stressed to a greater extent than with average child	Second	35	Third	26
Acceleration	Third	16	Second	34
PER CENT OF PUPILS NORMALLY ACCELERATED				
Fewer than 1 per cent		21		11
Between 1 and 5 per cent		12		18
Between 5 and 10 per cent				2
Between 10 and 25 per cent				4
Between 25 and 50 per cent				1
Between 50 and 100 per cent		2		1
FOR RETARDED CHILD				
Individual help during study and class periods	First	59	First	43
Lower minimum requirements for promotion	Second	33	Second	20
Special classes	Third	13	Fourth	10
Other*	Fourth	11	Third	11
Basic training for a vocation	Fifth	2	Fifth	4

*Give child work on his level regardless of grade listed on report card; individual lesson plans; use of older students as helpers; grouping; retention in lower grades; remedial work in basic subjects.

the present promotion practices were reported, certain findings emerged. According to teachers and principals from both educational agencies, average academic achievement was considered to be the most important factor in determining whether a pupil progressed to a higher grade. Achievement in reading and in understanding and use of the English language were given as the next most important reasons for promotion, although the order of importance of these two factors was reversed by teachers from the two systems.

While the bases for the standards which the student must reach before he was promoted were not discovered, the cultural loading of these criteria is indisputable. And, in light of the fact that standardized text books and instructional materials are used in native schools, the implication exists that native students should conform to grade standards created for children in the United States.

The establishment of any set of uniform achievement standards which are to be met by all children in the public schools before promotion to the next highest grade occurs has never met with complete success. Research shows that purposes which are presumably served by this practice are not in truth achieved.[1] Although a detailed discussion of pupil progress will not be presented in this report, the expectation that children representing a normal variation in abilities can and will reach the same achievement levels in given periods of time is not practical.

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[1] Willard S. Elsbree and Harold J. McNally, Elementary School Administration and Supervision (New York: American Book Co., 1951), p. 148.

Adding to the complexity of the problem, the imposition of uniform achievement standards developed for students in a different culture on a native population representing widely varying stages of acculturation is far more unrealistic. It means in practice that a pupil is penalized for the isolation of his home village, home environment in which the parents speak a foreign language, possession of different cultural values, and various other factors over which he has absolutely no control.

If the basic tenets of the American common school are accepted, there is a place for every normal child in the schools. Therefore, it is the task of the school to accept every child at his present level and help him progress as far as his abilities will allow him to go in the time he remains in school. And he should be encouraged to remain in school until it can truthfully be said that the school program has no more to offer him.

Realistically, the limitations of high school facilities and the relatively small proportion of students who proceed beyond the elementary school grades have undoubtedly had an effect on promotion practices. A few teachers feel that if a student will not leave his home village to proceed to high school it is necessary to hold him in the elementary school for as long a period of time as is possible.

Such a philosophy might argue for retention of the pupil in the elementary school grades to prevent his completion of the highest grade offered in the village school at the age of fourteen or fifteen. Despite the reasoning on the part of a few teachers that retention might aid in holding the pupil in school, this cause for non-promotion was ranked last in importance by the group of school personnel replying to the promotion questionnaire. With a possible expansion of high school facilities, reasoning such as this would be unwarranted.

Educational Aspirations

An additional factor important in determining promotion practices is the level of education which school personnel feel can and should be achieved by native students. Various points of view exist as to the role natives should play in the future state of Alaska. Are they to continue much in the pattern which has persisted for generations or has the recent and even greater predicted development of Alaska resulted in the commitment of the native people to inevitable and accelerating cultural change? While the major thesis of this report supports the latter point of view, the importance of the attitudes and educational aspirations of teachers and administrators actively engaged in native education cannot be minimized.

Two questions designed to give insights into these attitudes and aspirations were included on the promotion questionnaire. One question asked what minimum level of education should be attained by the majority of native students in the particular village where the respondent was employed. The second question inquired as to the probable level of education which would be attained by the majority of native pupils presently enrolled in the individual village schools.

The highest grade which teachers and principals from both educational agencies felt native students should complete exceeded by a noticeable margin the probable level of education which, it was believed, would be reached. However, the overall aspirations for native students held by school personnel were exceptionally low. Among employees of the Bureau of Indian Affairs the modal response indicated that for an adequate educational attainment completion of the eighth grade by the majority of native students was necessary. Ten respondents from both educational agencies considered that less than an eighth grade education was adequate for the majority of native students in their communities. Conversely, slightly over 50 per cent of the responding school personnel from Territorial schools considered high school graduation as the minimum education desirable for the majority of their students.

As previously stated, actual educational expectations fell below the level of education which respondents hoped native students would reach. Relatively few teachers and principals believed that the majority of native students in their schools would continue beyond the eighth grade. Complete tabulations of the replies pertaining to educational aspirations and expectations are shown in Table 44.

While precise interpretations of the replies received cannot be made, several possible explanations exist. It may be surmised that school personnel who consider education above the elementary school level unnecessary see little change in the future lives of the children they teach from the lives of their parents in the past. The educational objectives of these school personnel may still be focused upon simple existence of natives in villages where ability to hunt and fish, literacy, and knowledge of fundamental skills required for buying and selling will suffice. Evidence of this point of view is seen in the fact that several respondents listed higher actual expectations for educational achievement on the part of the native students than the level of education which they felt was necessary — or which _should_ be achieved. In other words, it was felt by a few that children would go further in school than was actually required. In light of the myriad forces referred to repeatedly in this report, however, such a viewpoint is felt to be entirely unrealistic.

Second, the confusion resulting from imposed and unrealistic academic standards has caused the unwarranted conclusion on the part of some teachers that most native

TABLE 44.

EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS OF TEACHERS FOR PUPILS IN ALASKAN NATIVE SCHOOLS

Educational aspirations and expectations	Territorial		Bureau of Indian Affairs	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS				
Minimum level of education desired by teachers for majority (75 per cent) of native children				
College	**0**		**1**	**1.92**
High school graduation	**32**	**51.60**	**12**	**23.08**
High school attendance	**6**	**9.68**	**8**	**15.38**
Grade 10 completion	**4**	**6.46**	**7**	**13.46**
Grade 8 completion	**10**	**16.12**	**18**	**34.62**
Grade 7 completion			**1**	**1.92**
Grade 6 completion	**6**	**9.68**	**2**	**3.85**
Grade 4 completion			**1**	**1.92**
No response	**4**	**6.46**	**2**	**3.85**
TOTALS	**62**	**100.00**	**52**	**100.00**
EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS				
Minimum level of education expected by teachers for majority (75 per cent) of native children				
College	**0**		**0**	
High school graduation	**3**	**4.51**	**2**	**3.85**
High school attendance	**3**	**4.51**		
Grade 11 completion			**1**	**1.92**
Grade 10 completion	**6**	**9.68**	**5**	**9.62**
Grade 9 completion	**3**	**4.51**		
Grade 8 completion	**37**	**59.67**	**24**	**46.15**
Grade 7 completion	**1**	**1.61**	**2**	**3.85**
Grade 6 completion	**2**	**3.22**	**14**	**26.92**
Grade 3 completion			**1**	**1.92**
No response	**7**	**11.29**	**3**	**5.77**
TOTALS	**62**	**100.00**	**52**	**100.00**

students are actually mentally retarded and hardly educable. An example of such an attitude is shown in the cynical statement of the teacher who opined, "I know what many of the problems are, but do not really know their relative importance. But they all add up to a sad situation. But no one around here seems to be very sad about it. The big problem in Western Alaska is birth control, not higher education."

The inference should not be drawn that attitudes of this sort typify the teachers of native students in Alaska. Such a conclusion would be completely unfair to the dedicated, understanding, and enlightened instructors who are working so effectively under less than ideal conditions. The fact does exist, however, that the imposition of unrealistic standards which the native student cannot in most instances hope to attain has led to the inaccurate conclusions in certain instances that the learner must inevitably be at fault. And as was stated in Chapter II, standardized achievement tests and intelligence tests which have been administered to native students have tended to reinforce this misconception.

In considering aspirations which various groups hold for native students, it is of interest to note that native leaders interviewed hold higher educational goals for native youth than do professional educators working in the schools — despite the fact that teachers and principals are presumably salesmen of education. The precise effects of the attitudes of teachers toward the minimum level of education for Alaskan natives cannot be measured. However, the fact that 22 out of 52 teachers from the Bureau of Indian Affairs considered an eighth grade education or less as adequate cannot help but influence the educational programs over which they preside. There is a serious question as to the likelihood that the average students from the 22 schools mentioned would receive special encouragement from the teacher to continue their education beyond the elementary school level, or perhaps would even obtain an adequate elementary school background for accomplishing this aim. Because the home environment is often such that the pupil does not receive parental encouragement which contributes to his educational success, the role of the school in providing this incentive becomes even more vital than is ordinarily the case.

Professional Qualifications of School Personnel

The foregoing discussion leads inevitably to the area of teacher personnel, their qualifications, and their effects upon the education of native students. To measure the exact influence a particular teacher exerts upon a student or group of students is almost impossible. However, in numerous instances prominent and successful native leaders throughout the Territory mentioned the incentives received early in their lives from ministers, teachers, and others who, by example and encouragement, presented models which they as students made efforts to emulate.

Attempts to relate student success in high school and college to factors which might have contributed to this achievement frequently pointed toward the influence of outstanding teachers. For example, a recent University of Alaska graduate directed much of the credit for his accomplishments toward one of his early teachers who is now teaching in the Fairbanks school system.

In essence, the importance of the quality of educational personnel working in native schools cannot be overemphasized. As a part of the present study, therefore, qualifications of teachers employed in native schools throughout the Territory were given careful attention. Because it was not possible to obtain college transcripts and personnel information about former teachers, the survey was limited to personnel employed by both educational agencies during the 1957-58 academic year. Official personnel records of teachers, teaching-principals, head-teachers, and superintendents who taught classes were analyzed. Information was not complete for all teaching personnel. College transcripts were not on file in the central offices in all cases. Therefore, teachers for whom accurate and complete information was not available were not included in the final tabulations.

Many intangible personal qualities which contribute to good teaching cannot be measured by any objective criteria contained in a personnel folder. Nevertheless teaching is a professional task and as such demands adequate professional training. An underlying assumption, therefore, in the survey of teacher qualifications is that teachers who have not received adequate training in subject matter areas and professional education should not be employed in native schools. The tabulated results of the survey on qualifications of elementary school teachers in native schools are included in Table 45. Similar results for teachers in native high schools operated by the Territorial Department of Education are listed in Table 46. Teachers employed in Mount Edgecumbe High School are not included in the study.

Considering first the qualifications of elementary school teachers in native schools, there is a noticeable contrast between the training of teachers employed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and those under the jurisdiction of the Territorial Department of Education. In general, the Territorial teachers are not as well prepared for their tasks as are teachers from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The different requirements in professional education courses demanded by the two agencies before certification or permanent status is possible accounts in part for the differences observed.

The Territorial Department of Education requires for an elementary school teaching certificate but "ninety (90) semester hours or one hundred thirty-five (135) quarter

TABLE 45.

COMPARISON OF TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS IN TERRITORIAL NATIVE AND BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS SCHOOLS

Elementary schools	Territorial		B.I.A.	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Teachers covered by report	180		102	
Degrees from accredited schools	117	65.00	75	73.53
Degrees from non-accredited schools	21	11.67	11	10.78
No degrees	42	23.33	16	15.69
No elementary school education courses	42	23.33	8[a]	8.89
High school graduation only	3	1.67	2[b]	2.22
Average hours in education	29.57		36.83[a]	
Average hours in elementary school education	10.53		15.31[a]	
Median hours in education	27.33		30.00[a]	
Median hours in elementary school education	8.0		13.00[a]	
Average years teaching experience	9.0		11.09	
Average years teaching in Alaska	5.17		5.04	
Median years teaching experience	6.0		7.0	
Median years teaching in Alaska	3.0		3.0	

[a] Data available for 90 teachers only.

[b] One teacher with Grade 8 education.

TABLE 46.

QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS IN TERRITORIAL NATIVE HIGH SCHOOLS

	Number	Per Cent
Teachers covered by report	16	
Degrees from accredited institutions	16	100.00
Masters degrees	4	25.0
Average hours in education	32.9	
Median hours in education	24.5	
Average years teaching experience	12.3	
Median years teaching experience	6.5	
Average years teaching in Alaska	5.3	
Median years teaching in Alaska	3	

hours from an accredited college or university; including at least sixteen (16) semester hours in Education . . . which shall include at least four (4) semester hours in Practice Teaching and Methods of Teaching . . . "[1]

In order for elementary school teachers to obtain a permanent appointment, the Bureau of Indian Affairs requires that they " . . . must show successful completion of a full 4-year course leading to a degree from an accredited college or university, including or supplemented by 24 semester hours in education of which 12 semester hours must have been in elementary education."[2]

While the stipulated requirements of the employing agencies determine in part the number of hours in education completed by teaching personnel, a majority of the findings cannot be explained this easily.

The most critical problem discovered in the survey concerns the fact that 42 (23.33 per cent) teachers employed in native elementary schools operated by the Territorial Department of Education during the 1957-58 academic year have not had any courses in elementary school education.

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[1] The Rules and Regulations of the Territorial Board of Education and Teachers' Retirement Board (Juneau: Territorial Department of Education, July 1, 1957), p. 16.

[2] ["Form Letter Sent to Applicants for Teaching Positions"], U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, JO-Per-2 (Juneau: Juneau Area Office, April 1, 1957), p. 1. (Mimeographed.)

Eight (8.89 per cent) Bureau of Indian Affairs elementary school teachers have had no training in elementary school subjects, according to their college transcripts.

The Territorial rules and regulations concerning certification do not specifically require the completion of courses in elementary education. As a result, teachers who have prepared for secondary school jobs, with a minimum of sixteen hours in education, frequently can meet the requirements for an elementary school teaching certificate and subsequently obtain positions in this Territory.

In addition to the lack of professional training possessed by a number of elementary school teachers, there is the equally disturbing problem of teachers in native schools who have received their degrees from non-accredited schools.[1] Further investigation of the college transcripts and the non-accredited colleges from which teachers had been graduated revealed two inherent dangers in the situation.

First, the relatively small size of the non-accredited schools, the limited number of offerings, and the academic training of their faculties cause the quality of the courses taken at these institutions to be questioned.

Second, a majority of the non-accredited schools under consideration were affiliated with various religious denominations and frequently emphasized programs of study which were sectarian in nature. The motives and purposes of teachers seeking positions in remote native villages cannot be determined by an investigation of college or religious background. Each teacher must be free to choose and practice the religion of his choice or be free to disregard religion in his personal life as he sees fit. Nevertheless, past experiences in Alaska have demonstrated the danger resulting from the employment of a minority of teachers who seek employment in remote villages with the ulterior motives of proselytizing and devoting their attention to tasks which are in conflict with Territorial and Federal policies relating to the complete separation of church and state. Such practices have in the past disrupted village life completely and at the very least distracted the teacher from his primary and full-time task of teaching.

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[1] Only colleges and universities approved by one of the six nationwide or regional agencies were considered to be fully accredited. These institutions are listed in the following publication: Education Directory, 1957-1958: Part 3, Higher Education, U. S. Office of Education (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1957).

While persons who have been graduated from denominational schools should not be refused employment for this reason, care must be taken that educational personnel do not use teaching as a vehicle for gaining entrance into a community for purposes of spreading religious doctrines and devoting the majority of their efforts to work other than instruction within the framework of an acceptable and non-sectarian curriculum.

There are sufficient grounds, however, for refusing employment to graduates from non-accredited institutions on the basis of their receipt of training from colleges or universities not meeting prescribed minimum requirements. Both educational agencies stipulate that degrees received by employees should have been obtained from accredited institutions. However, enforcement of these regulations has been lax.

A separate category of educational personnel not considered in the survey of teacher qualifications is that of instructional aids and training assistants. A total of 16 persons in these categories (8 instructional aids and 8 training assistants) were employed in 1957-58 by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Essentially, instructional aids are non-qualified teachers who, nevertheless, work in a classroom situation under the supervision of a teaching principal. The amount of direction and subsequent supervision provided these aids varies with each supervising teacher. In general, however, the mere fact that a head teacher is instructing a class separate and apart from the students directed by the aid and is charged with numerous clerical and administrative responsibilities in connection with the school and village inevitably restricts the time and attention that can be given to the instructional aid. In many instances the aid is left to his own devices and expected to fulfil the role of a qualified classroom teacher.

Training assistants are also non-qualified teachers but are employed in communities where no schools exist. These positions were created to serve as forerunners for the establishment of regular day schools. The training assistants are not considered to be teachers but are meant to serve a related function. A program is established in communities in which training assistants are employed whereby children become accustomed to a school-like routine, are frequently provided with a hot lunch program, and are given some experience in speaking English and learning certain basic concepts. The Bureau of Indian Affairs does not conceive of these programs as replacements for schools but merely as stop-gap measures to serve until schools can be established.

Most of the training assistants and instructional aids are natives who are employed in their home villages. Often these aids and assistants are invaluable in that they provide the teacher with a liaison officer to help form a bridge between the native and Western cultures. In addition, individual teachers have stated that young children often make greater progress in learning to speak English when they are taught by one knowing both languages than when they are instructed by a teacher familiar with only English.

The policy of encouraging the employment of local natives to work in the schools is a creditable one. The benefits which may be obtained both by the teacher and the children through working in close contact with a member of the native culture are not being questioned. And the dedication and sincerity of the assistants and aids themselves are, in the main, above reproach. However, the fact looms large that these aids and assistants are not professional teachers, yet frequently are in sole charge of planning lessons and instructing children throughout a full school day. Caution should be taken to assure that non-qualified teachers are not expected to assume responsibilities for professional tasks. The major governing consideration must be the welfare of the students. Teaching must not be relegated to a *position of semi-skilled labor* if progress in the education of Alaskan natives is to occur.

In general, the advanced training of teachers employed in native schools has improved tremendously in the past twenty-five years. In 1935 Anderson and Eells reported that only 67.9 per cent of the men and 80.8 per cent of the women employed in native schools had any formal education beyond the high school level.[1] The present survey shows that only 2 Bureau of Indian Affairs teachers and 3 Territorial teachers have not proceeded beyond high school graduation.

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[1] H. Dewey Anderson and Walter C. Eells, Alaska Natives: A Survey of Their Sociological and Educational Status (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1935), p. 364.

Twenty-three per cent of the Territorial elementary school teachers and 16 per cent of those employed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs do not have college degrees. However, these statistics compare favorably with those of elementary school teachers in rural areas in the United States where approximately 64 per cent are without degrees according to a National Education Association survey conducted in 1951-52.[1]

Numerous factors have contributed to the increased professionalism and amount of training possessed by teachers in native schools today as compared with the groups described by Anderson and Eells. First, salary payments for teachers in rural Alaskan schools do not, on the whole, fall below salaries paid in the larger population centers. The Territorial Department of Education operates under a minimum salary law which includes a salary scale with twelve increments for four judicial divisions. This law establishes the legal minimum below which no teacher may be paid.[2] While some independent school districts exceed this minimum, various fringe benefits make the financial incentives for teaching in remote areas more attractive in many instances than comparable positions in Fairbanks,

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[1] Clifford P. Archer, *Elementary Education in Rural Areas* (New York: Ronald Press, 1958), p. 11.

[2] *Compiled School Laws of the Territory of Alaska*, Revised edition (Juneau: Territorial Department of Education, July 1, 1957), p. 67.

Anchorage, or Juneau. Frequently living quarters are provided for nominal rents which help to stretch the teacher's actual take-home pay.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs teachers are given a regular Civil Service appointment which, on the basis of proper training and experience, calls for a GS-8 rating for the teaching principal and a GS-7 rating for the second teacher. In addition, a 25 per cent cost-of-living allowance is added to the base pay for service in Alaska and is not subject to Federal income tax. Living quarters are also provided for nominal rents. Transportation and shipment of household effects and other fringe benefits are provided if certain qualifications are met.[1]

While no detailed treatment of salary scales and employment regulations will be given in this report, the fact remains that the common practice throughout the United States of providing lower pay for teachers working in rural areas, as revealed in a pilot survey of beginning rural teachers in 1953-54, is not characteristic of teaching conditions in Alaska.[2] The higher pay received by rural teachers in the Territory is undoubtedly a factor in the attraction of better qualified teachers than are found throughout rural areas in the United States.

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[1] ["Form Letter Sent to Applicants for Teaching Positions."]

[2] *Salaries and Other Characteristics of Beginning Rural School Teachers: 1953-54, A Brief Report of a Pilot Survey*, U. S. Office of Education, Circular No. 446 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1955), pp. 1-14.

Encouraging though the improvement in teacher qualifications may be, the fact remains that far too many inadequately prepared instructional personnel are employed in the native schools of Alaska. Table 46 shows that the preparation of teachers in native high schools compares rather favorably with national standards, although the sampling is small. But the large proportion of elementary school teachers who have no degrees, degrees from non-accredited institutions, and few if any courses in elementary school education is cause for serious reflection.

The rural native schools throughout the Territory require and demand outstanding personnel who can adapt curricula prescriptions to fit varying local situations. Teachers are needed who can work with a minimum amount of supervision. Special understanding by the teacher of diverse cultural values and atypical behavior patterns on the part of the learner is necessary. And finally, special techniques are required for instructing bilingual students who are at different levels in their understanding and use of English. In summary, the most poorly trained teaching personnel in the Territory are congregating in locations where particularly creative and capable teaching is required.[1]

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[1] Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1956, p. 188.

Recognizing the need for well-trained teachers who are aware of special techniques for instructing in native schools, for a number of years the Bureau of Indian Affairs has provided periodic in-service educational workshops for its personnel. Also, provisions are made for employees in the Branch of Education of the Bureau of Indian Affairs to receive educational leave with pay in order to pursue advanced degrees or otherwise strengthen their professional preparation for teaching. Undoubtedly, these workshops and the added benefit of leave with pay for the purpose of obtaining additional education help to account for the overall greater amount of preparation of Bureau of Indian Affairs teachers in comparison with that of teachers employed in native schools operated by the Territorial Department of Education.

Teacher Turnover

The importance of well-planned, in-service, educational programs cannot be overstated. However, a major problem limiting the effectiveness of such a plan relates to the high rate of teacher turnover in native schools throughout Alaska. A former Territorial Commissioner of Education has aptly stated that teaching in Alaska is not a profession but rather a procession.[2] Although a slight

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[1] Report of the Alaska Commissioner of Education, 1946, p. 27.

overstatement, it does emphasize the problem of the "tourist-teacher" in schools throughout the Territory. It is apparent that limited benefits result from increasing the effectiveness of teachers who will not remain in the Territory for a sufficient period of time to justify this specialized training.

Varying philosophies exist as to the ideal tenure for a teacher in a small, isolated, rural community. Examples can be given in which extended tours of duty by teachers led to undue dominance of village affairs, the development of unhealthy paternalism, and generally stagnant educational practice. Nevertheless, a certain period of time is required before one is sufficiently acquainted with problems and conditions in a specific community to work most effectively.

Statistics furnished by the Bureau of Indian Affairs list the following annual turnover rates for the past five years:

1953-54 . . . . 25 per cent
1954-55 . . . . 23 per cent
1955-56 . . . . 19 per cent
1956-57 . . . . 23 per cent (estimated)
1957-58 . . . . 15 per cent (estimated)

Turnover as used in these calculations is defined to include only teachers and administrative personnel brought in to replace terminating employees.[1]

Since Territorial native schools constitute a special classification established for the purposes of this study only, no records were maintained for this particular group of schools. Consequently, a study was conducted in which the rate of turnover among teachers and administrators employed in Territorial native schools for the past ten years was determined. The same definition of turnover which was used by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in their calculations was retained.

For all Territorial schools included in the study, an annual turnover rate of 37.7 per cent was found. Over the ten-year period, the average length of time in which teachers remained at any one native school was 1.81 years. Further subdivisions were made in which large schools (defined as including more than three teachers) were separated from small schools (three or fewer teachers) and in which high schools were separated from elementary schools. Surprisingly, few differences were found in the average length of tenure or turnover rate among these three divisions. For example, average annual tenure for teachers in small schools was 1.6 years at any one school as compared with 1.9 years in large schools and an identical 1.9 years in native high schools. Similarly, 39.2 per cent of the teachers in small native schools left the system annually as compared with 37.3 per cent of the teachers in large schools and 34.9 per cent of the high school teachers.

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[1] Letter from Max W. Penrod, Area Director of Schools, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau Area Office, July 14, 1958.

The underlying causes for the high rate of teacher turnover cannot be given, but certainly the rapid shifting of personnel into and out of native schools points to a serious problem deserving additional attention. One explanation for the difference in the teacher turnover rate between the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Territorial Department of Education can be found in the fact that, unlike the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Territory operates a much larger school system than one merely comprising the native schools considered in this study. Therefore, it is possible, and in fact common practice, for personnel to leave native schools and yet remain in the Territorial school system. For purposes of the turnover calculations, however, any teacher who left the group of schools classified as native was considered to have left the system.

While it is suspected that many Territorial teachers gravitate from the predominantly rural native schools to the larger urban centers, detailed follow-up studies of those teachers who had departed from native schools during the ten-year period under consideration were not made.

Additional information as to the relative inexperience of teachers in native schools is given in Table 45.

The median number of years of Alaskan teaching experience possessed by personnel from both educational agencies was found to be three years.

Realistically, it may be impractical to expect superior personnel to content themselves with primitive conditions in remote communities for long periods of time. Irregular mail service, limited or non-existent supplies of fresh foods, and commonly substandard living accommodations without modern facilities seriously restrict the appeal of these positions except perhaps on a short-term basis. However, a more energetic recruiting program as well as increased attention to possible causes for teachers leaving native schools logically would improve the quality of teaching being carried out in individual schools.

Teacher Load and Class Size

Additional problems faced by teachers in native schools which affect the quality of instruction relate to teacher load and the closely allied issue of class size. As pointed out in Chapter I, throughout the history of the native schools the teacher has been called upon to serve in many different capacities, teaching being but one of these fields of endeavor. To determine teacher work load at the present time, a form was appended to the promotion questionnaire on which teachers indicated the number of hours spent on various tasks each week.

Full-time administrative personnel were not included in the survey since the purpose of the inquiry was to ascertain the duties and activities which might be replacing, or at least decreasing, the time spent on teaching and closely related tasks. Initial perusal of the completed inquiries showed a greater number of diverse tasks performed by Bureau of Indian Affairs teachers than were expected of Territorial teachers. In addition, head-teachers or principal-teachers from both agencies worked a greater number of hours a week than did full-time instructional personnel. In light of these facts, tabulations were made according to these four categories and are included in Table 47.

According to the estimates made by the respondents to the questionnaire, school personnel from both agencies work considerably more than a standard forty-hour work week. Particularly in the case of Bureau of Indian Affairs employees, the preponderance of extra duties listed do not appear to be closely related to the school program and detract from the important job of instructing children. The average time (4.9 hours per week) spent by Bureau of Indian Affairs teachers on classroom activities such as planning lessons, grading papers, etc., is considerably below the minimum amount of preparation required for adequate classroom teaching.

Community activities are important, but at no time should they consume such an inordinate amount of time that

TABLE 47.

COMPARISON IN TEACHER LOAD BETWEEN TERRITORIAL AND BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS SCHOOLS*

Task	Approximate hours spent per week by:			
	Head Teacher		Full-time Teacher	
	Terr.	B.I.A.	Terr.	B.I.A.
Classroom instruction	27.9	29.1	29.3	29.2
Classroom activities (planning lessons, grading papers, etc.)	10.9	7.0	10.9	4.9
Supervision of lunch program	1.2	2.4	1.8	3.9
Radio schedules	.2	2.4	.6	.7
Medical work and village health program	.5	3.4	3.8	3.0
Native cooperative stores	.1	.5	.0	.2
Adult education	.2	.6	.5	1.3
Community activities	2.9	2.7	2.1	2.2
Welfare cases	.4	1.2	.1	.4
Other	3.3	3.1	.4	1.5
TOTALS	47.6	52.4	49.5	47.3

*Percentage returns on questionnaires:

Territorial schools: 76 sent, 64 returned, 84.2 per cent.
Bureau of Indian Affairs schools: 64 sent, 51 returned, 79.7 per cent.

they reduce the effectiveness of the teacher's instructional program. Corroboration of this viewpoint was received from Hildegard Thompson, Chief of the Branch of Educ..ion, Bureau of Indian Affairs, who stated that teachers must divorce themselves more and more from such tasks as acting as welfare agents, postmasters, and advisors to the native stores and shift these responsibilities to local villagers whenever possible.[1]

Closely allied with teacher load is the ubiquitous problem of class size. Laudable efforts have been exerted, particularly by the Territorial Department of Education, to establish and maintain small classes in order to facilitate individualized instruction and to increase educational efficiency. In a general policy statement, the Territorial Department of Education advocated that a second teacher should be added to a school when the average enrollment equals 25. If more than six grades are taught in the school or if the majority of pupils is in grades one and two a second teacher may be added when the enrollment exceeds 20.[2] Implementation of these recommendations is contingent upon the availability of necessary classroom space and adequate housing accommodations for additional teachers.

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[1] Conversation with Hildegard Thompson, Chief, Branch of Education, Bureau of Indian Affairs, June 9, 1958.

[2] General statement of policy issued by the Office of the Commissioner of Education, Juneau. (Typewritten.)

A comparison of the teacher-pupil ratios of native elementary schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Territorial Department of Education reveals that a decided advantage is held by Territorial instructional personnel. (See Table 48.) Only 12 Territorial teachers had a pupil ratio of more than 20, whereas only 7 Bureau of Indian Affairs teachers enjoyed a pupil ratio of 20 or fewer.

Class-size studies are inconclusive concerning the specific and precise benefits found in relatively small classes, particularly as they relate to academic achievement. However, the difficulties faced by the rural teacher who is attempting to instruct 30 or more pupils ranging in age from six to sixteen inevitably will be monumental. While the recommendation is easily made that classes in native schools should not exceed 20, the difficulties inherent in implementing such a recommendation are not so easily overcome. Primarily, the problem remains a financial one which requires the hiring of additional teachers and provision of additional classroom facilities and teacher housing. Reduction of class size is a costly venture, but as an educational investment it is felt to be an extremely worthwhile expenditure.

TABLE 46.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF PUPILS PER TEACHER IN ALASKAN NATIVE SCHOOLS*

Pupils per teacher	Territorial	Bureau of Indian Affairs
Teachers with 10 pupils per classroom	3	0
Teachers with 11-15 pupils per classroom	23	1
Teachers with 16-20 pupils per classroom	25	6
Teachers with 21-25 pupils per classroom	9	20
Teachers with 26-30 pupils per classroom	3	19
Teachers with 31-35 pupils per classroom	0	8
Teachers with 36-40 pupils per classroom	0	8
Teachers with 41-45 pupils per classroom	0	1
TOTALS	63	63

*Includes head teachers, teachers, and instructional aids.

The Necessity for Additional Research

Myriad diverse problems relating to native education were encountered throughout the duration of the study. Because of the breadth of the topic, however, many of these areas did not receive the attention which is justified by their importance. Future research to investigate in detail these and related topics appears to be warranted.

In studies such as those conducted in Bethel, Nome, and Fairbanks, the family background of students was found to relate closely to children's success in school and to their educational aspirations. At the university level, in particular, successful native students were identified as those who had, for the most part, equally successful or prominent families. Numerous research findings have demonstrated conclusively the relationship between home environment and educational attainment. One such study showed that an adolescent whose father is in the upper economic bracket is three times as likely to continue beyond the eighth grade as is the child of a family in which the father is an unskilled laborer.[1] The relationship, therefore, between the education of families and their children forms a circle in which low levels of education tend to be perpetuated.

While encouraging examples exist of children from lower economic backgrounds who have shown the drive and the ability to take advantage of whatever educational opportunities are available and excel in selected fields, they do not typify native youth in Alaska. Effective methods by which native students can be inspired and encouraged to remain in school and benefit from its offerings are as yet undetermined.[1]

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[1] William M. Alexander and J. Galen Saylor, _Secondary Education, Basic Principles and Practices_ (New York: Rinehart and Co., 1950), p. 240.

Interviews with native leaders revealed their increased interest in education. The continued development of the Territory which portends more rapid acculturation of native groups into the dominant culture will result inevitably in a desire on the part of members of the younger generation for additional education. But an increased understanding is needed of forces which help to discover those children who will continue their schooling as opposed to those who will leave school at the earliest opportunity. Wherever preventable, children should not be crippled by an inadequate education when this decided handicap is caused by forces and factors over which they have little control.

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[1] The Bureau of Indian Affairs instigated a program of adult education which in 1957-58 was being operated in eleven villages. While the education of native adults for their beneficent effect upon school children is not a primary purpose of this program, such results hopefully may ensue. More broadly conceived, however, the education of adults should help to provide training in those skills and areas of knowledge in which the mature person feels inadequate. The program is voluntary and varies widely among participating communities. Native leaders interviewed welcomed the idea of adult education -- particularly if it provides training in functional areas such as carpentry, mechanics, and, for the women, homemaking.

The adult education experiment has not been in operation long enough for accurate evaluation. Instances of non-attendance and apathy on the part of the participants have been reported. However, whether the cause lies in the nature of the programs, ineffective leadership by the directors, or insufficient interest on the part of the native adults is not known. The plan, nevertheless, has considerable merit and should not only provide benefits for adults but should have positive effects upon the attitude and interest of members of the entire community.

A factor closely related to the student's family background which represents a distinct and more universal problem affecting education is that of the pupil's health. Malnutrition and susceptibility to relatively new and transplanted "foreign" diseases have created serious health problems in most native communities. Tuberculosis in particular has been the cause of many native pupils missing months of schooling. Also, a survey of eye, ear, nose and throat infections among Alaskan natives showed that:

> There was high prevalence of chronic upper respiratory infections as judged by diseased tonsils and adenoids, drum damage, loss in hearing and other signs. In all instances the Eskimo rate was the highest and White the lowest. Conditions in Eskimos were the most severe.
>
> . . . .
>
> There was a positive correlation between the socio-economic factors (housing, income and diet) and the above conditions. . . .
>
> It is most conservatively estimated that in the Eskimo population of 16,000, there are

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[1] Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, June 17, 1957.

> 2785 persons needing tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy, and 739 needing mastoidectomy.[1]

Better health practices have long been important objectives of education for natives. But the degree to which sub-standard health conditions influence the child's interest and success in school is not known.

Additional disparate yet important problems which influence education in Alaska were considered but not investigated adequately. Many of the physical school plants visited by the Executive Director were in deplorable condition characterized by poor ventilation, inadequate heating and lighting, and classrooms overcrowded beyond belief. Both agencies are replacing sub-standard buildings as rapidly as funds become available. And particularly in the larger native communities such as Fort Yukon and Kotzebue excellent modern plants have been built and are now occupied. But an accelerated building program is critically needed to alleviate the present hardships being experienced by teachers and children who are forced to occupy completely unattractive, uncomfortable, and unhealthy structures.

Further study is necessary to determine how the capital outlay for native schools might be stretched to the best advantage. The major issue to be resolved is whether, with a limited building fund, completely modern yet costly plants should be constructed in relatively few communities or whether a compromise plan should be adopted whereby prefabricated and less expensive structures could be built in a larger number of villages.

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[1] Charles R. Hayman and Francis Kester, "Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Infection in Natives of Alaska," Northwest Medicine, LVI (April, 1957), 429-30.

Examples of both of these plans can be found in the Territory. The Bureau of Indian Affairs has for the most part built excellent plants in a number of communities. The Territorial Department of Education has experimented in centers such as Lower Tonsina with the less expensive type of school buildings. Additional data are needed to help determine the advantages and disadvantages of both plans.

While the building program must be concerned with the replacement of sub-standard buildings, the need for additional capital outlay for schools extends beyond the mere replacement of present plants. New schools must be established for students presently without educational facilities. Olsen estimated that 1200 native students reside in villages without access to elementary schools.[1] The problem of providing educational facilities for these children transcends the construction of physical plants alone and includes as well the employment of additional teachers and increased expenditures for supplies.

Future research studies are badly needed in the field of native education. In addition to topics already suggested, key areas for promising inquiries abound. More detailed research relating to instructional methods and materials suitable for native schools must be conducted. Most teachers employed in village schools are imported from the United States where their entire training has been oriented toward public school teaching in urban, or at least non-native, schools. They do not have an adequate understanding of the problems inherent in the field of native education. While the eventual goal should be a common education for all children in Alaska, this objective cannot be interpreted to mean identity of education. The immediate goal must be directed toward beginning at the level of the learner and progressing in the direction of the projected end-result. Teaching aids should be developed which can be understood and used by teachers not specifically trained in the field of native education. A large part of the present gap between native and non-native levels of education can be attributed to inefficient methods of instruction. Particularly in the area of communication, techniques which have been developed for teaching English as a second language should be adapted and utilized. While research studies cast serious doubt upon the benefits of teaching formal grammar in any of the public schools, this practice (commonly employed in native schools) is considered to be doubly ineffective when used with bilingual students.

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[1] Transcribed tape recording of an address by William Olsen, Area Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau Area Office, to a group of Presbyterian Church leaders at Sitka, August 26, 1957.

No universal curriculum plan or set of standard instructional materials can possibly apply to all native schools. The need for considerable regional and local adaptation in instructional procedures will always be apparent. But guides can be established, materials produced, and effective leadership emphasized which will have a telling effect upon the operation of local school programs.

Improved and more complete follow-up studies of native youth who leave school are needed. No curriculum can be considered satisfactory until the effect it has had upon the pupils for whom it was designed is determined. Such a follow-up study should include dropouts as well as graduates at all educational levels -- elementary, secondary, and higher. The information obtained should provide a valuable basis for curriculum revisions in native schools.

A plan for attracting and holding superior teachers and administrators in native schools should be developed and should include the important phases of recruitment, selection, orientation, and in-service education of personnel. It has been shown that pay scales for teachers in native schools compare very favorably with urban schools. Therefore, the obvious answer of increasing the salary to attract and hold competent teachers is insufficient.

Attempts have been made on the part of both educational agencies operating native schools in Alaska to merge the two systems. Problems in the unification of these school systems were treated briefly in Chapter I. A careful study should be undertaken which will point to a method by which one agency, logically the Territorial Department of Education, would be responsible for the education of all children in the Territory. Of necessity, such a study would have to deal with financial arrangements agreeable to both school systems which would allow the Territory to assume control and perhaps gradual financial responsibility for all schools in Alaska.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Diverse yet related problems affecting the quality of the program of education for Alaskan natives have been considered. No panacea exists for their solution. Nevertheless, most of the important changes implied or suggested require changes in attitudes and practices of educational personnel. The problem of age-grade placement, promotion and non-promotion, and teacher aspirations for native students cannot be solved by administrative edict. Enlightened leadership by supervisory personnel together with the extension of in-service educational programs and distributed circulars and memoranda relating to these and other pertinent topics will help immeasurably. But before in-service education can be effective, a basic minimum of training must be required of teachers and administrators employed in native schools. The proportion of elementary school teachers who have no training in elementary school subjects, the number of teachers without college degrees, and the per cent of teachers who have received degrees from non-accredited institutions illustrate the need for an active teacher recruitment program and a revision of the Territorial certification requirements to prevent persons from teaching without a specified minimum preparation for the particular level at which the teaching will be performed.

Factors such as isolation, poor living accommodations, and limited opportunities for professional advancement make difficult the prospect of attracting and holding outstanding teacher personnel in rural communities. Still, the lure of a new territory, the challenge of a stimulating and worthwhile job that needs doing, a better-than-average pay scale, and numerous fringe benefits do not make the task an impossible one.

Increased publicity and an energetic recruiting program which includes regular contact with college and university placement bureaus should provide an increased number of applicants from which to choose. The realities of the situation are such, however, that it is doubtful whether transfer and turnover rate among rural teachers can ever be made to approximate those of a modern, urban school system. Consequently, these facts must be recognized. The enthusiasm and intelligence of young teachers may have to be accepted in partial payment for their lack of experience. But experience alone is not deemed to be so important that quality can be sacrificed for longevity.

The recruiting of an increasing number of teachers who reside in Alaska and have had their training in the Territory will inevitably reduce teacher turnover. The fact that the majority of the teachers presently employed in native schools have their home-ties in the United States contributes to the poor holding power of the schools.

In addition, once adequately trained teachers have been selected, a continuing plan of in-service growth should be maintained. Ideally, a cooperative program involving the University of Alaska and both educational agencies could be most profitable. Work in linguistics which would apply to teaching English to bilingual students, sessions in professional education directed toward native schools, and basic concepts of Alaskan anthropology are examples of areas which should be included in the summer programs for teachers. In-service educational programs in which teachers from both agencies participated would have the added advantage of demonstrating the common problems inherent in native education which are faced by all teachers. And finally, a cooperative program of the type suggested would aid in unifying the broad aims and objectives of native education which will facilitate the eventual and desirable merging of the two separate school systems presently operating in the Territory of Alaska.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Change is inevitable in a rapidly expanding society. That the way of life for Alaskan natives has undergone drastic revision and faces even more upheaval in the generations to come is indisputable. The role of education in easing the transition of a minority group involuntarily yet inexorably caught in the process of acculturation has been the major concern of this study.

The exact place which Alaskan natives will occupy in the new state of Alaska hinges in part upon the future of the new state itself and can only be surmised. In discussing the factors upon which Alaska's future economy relies, Jensen states:

> If I am correct in assuming the existence of the above mentioned forces in the domestic and world economy, there seems to be a basis for cautious optimism with regard to the future of the Alaskan economy.
>
> . . . .
>
> Personally, I think that we are warranted in assuming that the civilian sector of the Alaskan economy will grow in the years ahead; maybe not at a violent and breath-taking rate, but at a solid pace.[1]

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[1] Hans E. Jensen (Associate Professor of Economics, University of Alaska), "The Alaskan Economy under Statehood: An Appraisal of the Unappraisable" (Unpublished research paper, November 3, 1958), p. 8. (Typewritten.)

Regardless of the rate of development of the Alaskan economy, the native people are committed to the task of finding their way in a new culture and a new way of life which will involve the development of new values and the dropping of many vestiges of their own culture. Such a process must be a voluntary one; still there are myriad evidences to support the claim that the people themselves desire the change. No longer do these people want to settle for a lower standard of living than is maintained by the average citizen, nor do they wish to be wards of the government. The desire on the part of the people for prestige, self-respect, and economic independence has been demonstrated in numerous intangible, yet emphatic, ways.

Education can serve as one vital influencing force designed to decrease the differences in attainment and opportunity which exist at the present time between native and non-native groups. Therefore, IT WAS CONCLUDED THAT the long-range objectives of the schools must be pointed toward an eventual common education for all, regardless of race. ~~Yet~~ the immediate instructional program must be planned to account for the enormous differences in the backgrounds, values, and orientation of the native students in the diverse regions of the Territory. An intelligent understanding by the teachers of the problems faced by those "caught between two worlds" is essential.

Significant accomplishments have been made in the field of education since the meager appropriation of

$25,000 was allotted to Sheldon Jackson in 1885 for the organization and administration of schools in Alaska. Elementary schools are operated in most rural villages. High school facilities exist for those residing in certain communities and for students who qualify for admittance to the government boarding school. Financial assistance is being offered in increasing amounts to students with adequate preparation who are desirous of continuing their education beyond the secondary school level. But much remains to be done.

Despite the fact that schools have been established in various Alaskan communities for more than half a century, an enormous gap in the education and economic well-being still exists between natives and non-natives in ~~the Territory of~~ Alaska. ① The extent of the gap and reasons for the lag have been studied and recommendations made for improving the existing situation.

Major findings include:

(1) Standardized achievement test results indicate considerable retardation of native students. Non-verbal test results show less retardation than do tests which rely heavily upon verbal skills.

(2) Academic achievement and overall adjustment of native students in public schools with mixed enrollments fall below that of non-native pupils.

(3) There is a slight inverse relationship between

degree of native blood and academic achievement. This relationship is attributed to the non-native influences resulting from mixed marriages -- not to racial composition.

(4) The home background is one of the strongest forces in determining the achievement and adjustment of native pupils enrolled in public schools.

(5) Forty per cent of students in native schools are overage in relation to normal age-grade placement. There is marked variation in overage grade placement among districts of the Territory.

(6) There is a direct relationship between early dropout and age-grade placement in native schools.

(7) Ability to use and understand English ranks high as a factor in school promotion. Promotion practices are often unrealistically based on standards developed for non-native schools.

(8) Few native students are enrolled in post-high-school educational institutions. Of those who do register, few graduate. Dropout rate is due to academic and social difficulties. Transcript analysis indicates that English and mathematics present the greatest hurdles.

(9) Instructional materials used in native schools are designed for schools in the continental United States and are inappropriate for use in remote Alaskan schools enrolling bilingual and non-English speaking students. In addition, instructional techniques commonly used in native

schools are not adapted, in many instances, to take account of the restricted environmental background and English handicaps of the learner.

(10) School facilities in Alaska are inadequate to meet the present and projected demands of Alaskan natives for increased educational opportunities.

(11) Inadequacy of school facilities is critical at the secondary school level. Only one overcrowded government boarding high school, which was forced to reject two out of three new applicants for the 1958-59 school year,[1] is being maintained in Alaska. Several small rural high schools in the larger native communities struggle for existence in the face of inadequate facilities, limited staff, and restrictive, rigidly academic, and unsuitable course offerings.

(12) The secondary school "bottleneck" has exerted its negative influence on both the elementary schools and higher educational institutions.

(13) Native parents have higher educational aspirations for their children than do many teachers. Over 50 per cent of the teachers questioned felt that a high school education was not necessary for native students.

(14) Many teachers lack the specialized training necessary to comprehend and assess the problems of teaching

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[1] Max W. Penrod, "A Covenant," *Highlights in Education*, VI (November, 1958), U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau Area Office, 1.

in native schools.

(15) The qualifications of teachers employed in schools with predominantly native enrollment are unsatisfactory.

(16) Rapid teacher turnover, oversized classes, excessive teacher load, and substandard and inadequate physical facilities are other problem areas brought out in the study.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, certain recommendations were formulated. They include:

(1) Special provisions must be made for students with restricted backgrounds and lack of readiness for dealing with verbal abstractions.

(2) Lengthening of the school year to include camping activities, work experience, dramatics, and related offerings would be beneficial.

(3) Specially prepared instructional materials designed for native students are needed. Instructional techniques such as those developed for teaching English as a second language should be explored through future research studies for possible suitability.

(4) These instructional techniques should be implemented and adapted in in-service workshops held for teachers of native students -- ideally to be held at the University of Alaska for teachers from both the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Territorial Department of Education.

(5) Regional four-year high schools should be established in communities selected on the basis of present population and probable future growth. These schools should be comprehensive in scope. Pre-vocational as well as academic course offerings should be made available. In the academic departments, particular stress should be placed on mathematics and English.

(6) Cottage-type housing facilities should be arranged to provide accommodations for students who would attend the regional high schools nearest their homes.

(7) Vocational education is needed for students at the post-high-school level. The specific training should be geared to the employment demands of the region.

(8) In general, vocational schools should be post-high-school institutions. However, opportunity should be available for the youth who does not complete high school or the adult without a high school education to receive specialized training in a specific trade.

(9) Present teaching personnel not meeting prescribed minimum standards should be replaced.

(10) An energetic recruitment program should be undertaken to publicize the challenge and satisfactions of teaching in native schools.

(11) Recruitment and selection of qualified personnel must be supplemented by a continual program of in-service education for all teaching and administrative

personnel.

(12) Additional research should be conducted in various areas of native education. The most urgent need for additional study is in the field of instructional techniques and materials for native schools.

No drastic or revolutionary proposals have been suggested in this report which call for major reversals of present operating procedures. Although weaknesses in the present systems are apparent, the general direction in which the schools are moving is encouraging. In addition, the likelihood that drastic revisions would be accepted and implemented are slim indeed. The schools and society are so closely intertwined that one cannot stretch too far from the other. While education as a force can, and should, help to shape society, it must be tempered by realism and the safeguard of public acceptance.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A. MEMBERS OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Dr. William K. Keller, Head, Department of Education, University of Alaska, College, Alaska; Chairman.

Mr. Howard A. Matthews, Assistant Commissioner for Instructional Services, Alaska Department of Education, Juneau, Alaska.

Mr. Max W. Penrod, Area Director of Schools, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau, Alaska.

Dr. Ivar Skarland, Head, Department of Anthropology, University of Alaska, College, Alaska.

Dr. Robert R. Wiegman, Vice-President, University of Alaska, College, Alaska.

APPENDIX B. SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES VISITED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR IN CONNECTION WITH THE ALASKAN NATIVE EDUCATION PROJECT

Barrow
Beaver
Bethel
Chalkyitsik
Circle City
Copper Center
Craig
Dillingham
Fort Yukon
Gakona
Glennallen
Haines
Hoonah
Hydaburg
Kake
Kenny Lake
Ketchikan
Klawock
Kotzebue
Lower Tonsina
Mentasta
Mount Edgecumbe
Nome
Northway
Stevens Village
Sitka
Tanacross
Venetie

APPENDIX C. SCHOOLS ENROLLING ONE-HALF OR MORE ALASKAN NATIVES

Territorial Schools

Aleutian and Southern Coastal District

Afognak
Akutan
Aleknagik
Alitak
Belkofski
Chenega
Chignik
Clark's Point
Dillingham
Egegik
Ekwok
Karluk
Larsen Bay
Levelock
Naknek
Nikolski
Nondalton
Newhalen
Old Harbor
Ouzinkie
Pauloff Harbor
Pedro Bay
Perryville
Pile Bay
Pilot Point
Port Graham
Port Heiden
Sand Point
South Naknek
Tatitlek
Tyonek
Unga

River System District

Allakaket
Aniak
Anvik
Bethel
Bettles Field
Candle
Crooked Creek
Fortuna Ledge
Fort Yukon
Hughes
Huslia
Kobuk
Koyukuk
McGrath
Napamute
Nyac
Ruby
Russian Mission
Takotna
Teller

Incorporated Schools

King Cove
Nome*
Seldovia
Unalaska

Southeastern District

Angoon
Craig
Hoonah
Hydaburg
Kake
Kasaan
Klawock
Tenakee
Yakutat

Road and Rail Belt District

Chistochina
Chitina
Copper Center
Dot Lake
Kenny Lake
Nenana

*Nome is not included in age-grade calculations.

Bureau of Indian Affairs Boarding School

Mount Edgecumbe
Wrangell

Bureau of Indian Affairs Day Schools

Bethel District

Akiachak
Akiak
Alakanuk
Atka
Chaneliak
Chevak
Chowoctolik
Eek
Goodnews Bay
Holikachuk
Hooper Bay
Kalskag
Kasigluk
Kipnuk
Koliganek
Kwethluk
Kwiguk
Manokotak
Mekoryuk
Mountain Village
Napakiak
Napaskiak
Nash Harbor
Newktok
New Stuyahok
Nightmute
Nunapitchuk
Pilot Station
Quinhagak
Scammon Bay
Shageluk
Sleetmute
Tununak
Tuluksak
Tuntutuliak
Togiak

Fairbanks District

Arctic Village
Beaver
Circle
Eagle
English Bay
Fort Yukon
Galena
Kaltag
Klukwan
Minto
Northway
Stevens Village
Tanacross
Tanana
Tetlin
Venetie

Barrow District

Barrow
Barter Island
Wainwright

Nome District

Buckland
Deering
Diomede
Elim
Gambell
Kiana
King Island
Kivalina
Kotzebue
Koyuk
Noatak
Noorvik
Point Hope
Point Lay
St. Michael
Savoonga
Selawik
Shaktoolik
Shishmaref
Shungnak
Solomon
Stebbins
Teller Mission
Unalakleet
Wales
White Mountain

APPENDIX D. PERSONS PARTICIPATING IN RELATED RESEARCH STUDIES

Mr. Nathan Chaney (Graduate Student, University of Alaska), Principal, Nordale Elementary School, Fairbanks.

A study of the adjustment of native students in selected Fairbanks elementary schools.

Interpretation of test data for native schools.

Mr. Robin Dean, Superintendent, Mount Edgecumbe High School, Mount Edgecumbe.

A study of Mount Edgecumbe graduates.

Mr. Donald Kenny (M. Ed., University of Alaska), Principal, Ursa Minor Elementary School, Fort Richardson.

Interpretation of test data for native schools.

Miss Adele Konopka (M. Ed., University of Alaska), Fourth Grade Teacher, Main Elementary School, Fairbanks.

A study of the adjustment of native students in selected Fairbanks elementary schools.

A study of student dropouts at Mount Edgecumbe High School.

Mr. Reinford Mattoon, (M. Ed., University of Alaska), Assistant Principal, Central Elementary School, Anchorage.

Interpretation of test data for native schools.

Miss Lois Meier (M. Ed., University of Alaska), Curriculum Coordinator, Lathrop High School, Fairbanks.

A study of the adjustment of native students in the Fairbanks high school.

A study of student dropouts at Mount Edgecumbe High School.

Mrs. Ethel R. Oliver, First Grade Teacher, Mount Spurr Elementary School, Elmendorf Air Force Base.

A survey of the Bethel schools.

Mr. Robert Peratrovich, Jr. (Graduate Student, University of Alaska), Teacher, Klawock Elementary School, Klawock.

Interpretation of age-grade data for native schools.

Mr. William Rasmussen (M. Ed., University of Alaska), Principal-Teacher, Bureau of Indian Affairs Day School, Circle.

An age-grade study of children enrolled in native schools.

Mrs. A. Teresa Ripley, Teacher and Guidance Counsellor, Mount Edgecumbe High School, Mount Edgecumbe.

A study of Mount Edgecumbe graduates.

Mr. John Spencer (Graduate Student, University of Alaska), Teacher, Territorial Elementary School, Pedro Bay.

Data collection for a study of student dropouts at Mount Edgecumbe High School.

Mrs. Dorothy Wilde (Former Bureau of Indian Affairs Teacher; Graduate Student, University of Alaska), Kindergarten Teacher, Hunter Elementary School, Fairbanks.

An analysis of native students enrolled at the University of Alaska.

A study of teacher turnover in Territorial schools enrolling one-half or more native students.

Mrs. Alice Wilson (M. Ed., University of Alaska), Former Principal, Bureau of Indian Affairs Day School, Fort Yukon.

A survey of the Nome public schools.

A survey of the Fort Yukon school.

Mr. Paul L. Winsor, Acting Area Field Representative, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Anchorage.

A study of the qualifications of Bureau of Indian Affairs teachers.

APPENDIX E. CONSULTANTS AND CONTRIBUTORS

Mr. William L. Angell, Superintendent of Schools, Nome.

Mr. Lindell F. Bagley, Principal, Bureau of Indian Affairs Day School, Kotzebue.

Mrs. Pauline V. Burkher, Teacher, Alaska Native Health Service Hospital, Anchorage.

Mr. T. J. Cole, Superintendent of Schools, Sitka.

Mr. Sterling G. Croell, School Superintendent, Barrow.

Mr. Don M. Dafoe, Commissioner of Education, Juneau.

Mr. Everett M. Dalton, Superintendent of Schools, Fort Yukon.

Mr. J. E. Danielson, Superintendent of Schools, Ketchikan.

Mr. John I. Eichman, Educational Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau.

Mr. Joseph Eisenstein, Teacher, Territorial Elementary School, Kenny Lake.

Mr. Truman Emberg, Independent Fisherman, Dillingham.

Mr. Jens H. Forshaug, Relocation Officer, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Fairbanks.

Mr. Richard Francis, Educational Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Nome.

Mr. Henry Gilbertson, Principal-Teacher, Territorial School, Glennallen.

Mr. Robert Grant, Area Field Representative, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Nome.

Mr. Arnold Granville, Elementary Supervisor, Territorial Department of Education, Anchorage.

Mr. Robert Green, Episcopal Missionary, Tanacross.

Mr. Merrill Hatcher, Correspondence Study and Testing Supervisor, Territorial Department of Education, Juneau.

Mr. James E. Hawkins, Area Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau.

Mr. Raymond Hruschka, Director, Alaska Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Juneau.

Miss Geneva Hubbard, Acting Regional Nursing Administrator, Alaska Department of Health, Juneau.

Mr. Robert P. Isaac, Administrative Assistant, Territorial Department of Education, Juneau.

Mr. William A. Jackson, Educational Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bethel.

Mr. William L. Jahn, Superintendent of Schools, Haines.

Mrs. Laura E. Jones, Registrar, University of Alaska, College.

Mr. Walter H. Knape, Training Assistant in Adult Education, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Tanacross.

Dr. Margaret Lantis, Social Anthropologist, U. S. Public Health Service.

Mr. Donald V. Lewvere, Superintendent of Schools, Dillingham.

Miss Eunice Logan, Educational Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau.

Miss Nell Lomprey, Director, Division of Health Education, Alaska Department of Health, Juneau.

Mrs. Helen M. March, Member, Territorial Board of Education, Anchorage.

Miss Lois M. Morey, Elementary Supervisor, Territorial Department of Education, Juneau.

Mr. Bernard E. Park, Superintendent of Schools, Hoonah.

Mrs. Leah Peterson, Elementary Curriculum Coordinator, Anchorage School System, Anchorage.

Mrs. Myra F. Rank, Member, Territorial Board of Education, Fairbanks.

Dr. James C. Ryan, Superintendent of Schools, Fairbanks.

Mr. Chester Stone, Superintendent of Schools, Metlakatla.

Mrs. Rhoda Thomas, Educational Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Anchorage.

Mrs. Hildegard Thompson, Chief, Branch of Education, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Warren Tiffany, Educational Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Nome.

Mr. Michael J. Walsh, Member, Board of Regents, University of Alaska, Nome.

Mr. Francis J. Ward, Principal, Hydaburg Elementary School, Hydaburg.

Mr. Karl Ward, Principal, Haines High School, Haines.

Mr. Albert Watkins, Head Teacher, Territorial Elementary School, Perryville.

Mr. Marion L. Whittaker, Superintendent of Schools, Craig.

Mr. Paul L. Winsor, Acting Area Field Representative, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Anchorage.

APPENDIX F. A GUIDE FOR INTERVIEWING NATIVE LEADERS

Explanation: Each interview varied slightly to include special regional problems and to take account of the different levels of proficiency in English and overall comprehension of the issues discussed which were possessed by the persons being interviewed. Common areas of inquiry were included, however, in all instances. The questions listed below are representative and are meant to indicate only the type of information sought. Considerable flexibility was necessary in actual wording and in questions asked in the interview situations. The function of the guide was to prevent the possible omission of pertinent items.

1. What should native children be educated to do?
    a. What should the schools teach?
    b. Should children be educated for life in their home villages or prepared to live and work in the larger population centers?
    c. What kinds of jobs would you like to see native children trained to accept?
2. What is the minimum amount of education that is needed by the majority of native children regardless of special ability or atypical background?
3. Should this minimum education be a common education? That is, should all children receive the same kind of education up to the minimum that you recommend?
    a. If yes,
        1) what should this education stress (vocational training, health, citizenship, academic skills, language, other)?
        2) how will the schools be organized?

b. If no.

  1) when should segregation occur?

  2) what type of education do you propose for the different groups?

  3) on what basis should the division into groups be made?

  4) where will the education for the different groups occur (in the village, in centrally located schools, etc.)?

4. What level of education should be offered in (home village of interviewee)?

  a. If level given is below minimum education recommended, where should additional education take place?

  b. What minimum level of education should be available in the relatively large villages such as Bethel, Fort Yukon, Barrow, Kotzebue, Unalakleet, etc.?

5. At the present time, for those children who continue school beyond the level offered in (name of village), do you prefer large centrally located schools or small regional schools nearer this community?

  a. If small regional schools are preferred,

    1) where should they be located?

    2) what level of training should be provided?

    3) what type of training should be provided?

  b. If centrally located schools are preferred,

    1) where should they be located?

    2) what type of training should be provided?

  c. If schools are located away from the local village,

    1) do you prefer boarding schools primarily for for native students?

    2) do you prefer dormitories or other living accomodations for students from different communities and integration of all students into public schools?

6. Is it desirable for the majority of the pupils to leave their home villages to continue their education?

   a. If yes, why?

   b. If no, why?

7. Does the majority of children who leave home for advanced schooling return to the home villages upon the completion of training? Is this good or bad? Why?

8. What are the parents' attitudes about having their children leave home to attend school?

   a. Do they resent their children's leaving?

   b. Do they encourage or discourage their children's leaving?

   c. Do they encourage or discourage their children's return to their own community after completion of their education?

9. How do the students themselves feel about leaving home to continue their education?

10. Should there be any difference between the type of education given to native children and that offered to non-native children?

    a. If yes,

       1) what should be the difference?

       2) how should this program be organized?

    b. If no, does this imply integration into public schools or merely the same type of curriculum as that used in the public schools?

11. What is the major reason that native children do not continue their education beyond the present somewhat low level? How might this be rectified?

12. What is the general enthusiasm of the parents as far as education for their children is concerned?

    a. How important do they think education is in the lives of their children?

       1) What type of program will the people actively support?

        2) How much education will the people support?

    b. How does the present attitude toward education compare with the feelings held twenty or twenty-five years ago?

    c. What is the general attitude of the pupils themselves about the importance of education in their lives?

13. Would the people of (name of village) be interested in a program of education for adults?

    a. If yes, what type of education or training might be preferred?

    b. If yes, approximately what percentage of the village population would participate?

14. What is the major weakness of the present school program for native children -- either curricular or organizational?

15. What place does vocational training have today in the education of Alaska's native youth?

    a. Should the program of education focus primarily on vocational training or stress academic skills?

        1) If vocational education is indicated, for what vocation should training be given?

        2) At what level should vocational education begin?

    b. Should only special groups receive vocational education?

        1) Which groups?

        2) How selected?

16. Relatively few native students enter colleges or universities.

    a. Why?

    b. How might these obstacles be overcome?

17. Miscellaneous comments you care to make on the entire program of education in Alaska.

APPENDIX G. NATIVE LEADERS INTERVIEWED

Mr. Kenneth Albert, Northway.

Mr. Oscar Albert, Northway.

Mr. Joe Amarok, Nome. (Owner of Laundry)

Mrs. Emily Brown, Kotzebue. (Elementary School Teacher)

Mr. Dickie Carroll, Fort Yukon. (Member, Village Council)

Mr. George Carteeti, Hoonah.

Mr. Phillip Charley, Glennallen.

Mrs. Flossie Connery, Barrow. (Elementary School Teacher)

Mr. Frank Degnan, Unalakleet. (Former Territorial Representative)

Mr. Archie W. Demmert, Klawock. (Head Teacher)

Mr. Joe Demit, Northway.

Mr. Markle Ewan, Gulkana.

Mr. Bacille George, Copper Center.

Mr. Joe Goodlataw, Lower Tonsina.

Mr. Arthur Henry, Beaver. (Mayor)

Mr. Fred Ipalook, Barrow. (Elementary School Teacher)

Mr. Percy Ipalook, Kotzebue. (School Clerk; Former Territorial Senator)

Mr. Paul Ivanoff (deceased), Eek. (Former Instructional Aid)

Mr. Tony Jackson, Copper Center.

Mr. Leonard John, Stevens Village. (Member, Village Council)

Mr. Frank G. Johnson, Kake. (Elementary School Teacher; Territorial Representative)

Mr. Joe Joseph, Tanacross.

Mr. Stanley Joseph, Circle.

Mr. Tony Joule, Deering. (Principal-Teacher)

Mr. Harold S. Kaveolook, Barter Island. (Instructional Aid)

Mr. Bob Martin, Kake. (Alaska Coastal Airlines Employee)

Mrs. Bob Martin, Kake. (Housewife)

Mrs. Mary McDougall, Napaskiak. (Elementary School Teacher)

Mr. Jim McKinley, Copper Center.

Mr. Arthur Nagozruk, Sr., Nome. (Retired Teacher)

Mr. Arthur Nagozruk, Jr., Buckland. (Principal-Teacher)

Mr. Walter Northway, Northway.

Mr. David Paul, Tanacross.

Mr. Robert Peratrovich, Sr., Klawock. (Storekeeper)

Mr. Robert Peratrovich, Jr., Klawock. (Elementary School Teacher)

Mr. Frank See, Hoonah. (Storekeeper)

Mrs. Frank See, Hoonah. (Storekeeper)

Mr. John Smith, Metlakatla. (Mayor)

Rev. Walter Sobaleff, Juneau. (Minister)

Mrs. Dorothy H. Stone, Nikolai. (Elementary School Teacher)

Mr. Moses Thomas, Tanacross.

APPENDIX H. AGE-GRADE STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO ALASKAN NATIVE SCHOOLS

TO: PRINCIPALS AND HEAD TEACHERS

FROM: Charles Ray, Department of Education, University of Alaska, College, Alaska.

SUBJECT: Alaskan Native Education Study.

The University of Alaska is conducting a research study of native education in Alaska. This study has been made possible by a financial grant received from the United States Office of Education. Both the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Territorial Department of Education are cooperating in this project.

In our preliminary investigation we are trying to determine why a greater proportion of native students do not continue their education beyond the elementary school level than is now the case. The factor which appears to bear strong relationship to this question is age-grade placement, or overageness in grade. The following questions are designed to help give information as to the reasons for the age-grade placement in your school at the present time. Your cooperation in completing the form promptly and returning it in the self-addressed envelope will be appreciated most sincerely.

Name of School____________________ Date______________

Report completed by__________________ Position____________

1. Do you have a beginners or kindergarten level in your school? Yes_____ No_____

2. Has your school been closed for one or more school years in the past eight years? Yes____ No____

    a. If yes, how many years?__________
    b. If yes, what were the reasons for the school being closed?__________

3. To the best of your knowledge, within the last eight years has it been a practice at your school to have children repeat grades if they do not reach certain levels of achievement? Yes____ No____ Uncertain __

4. Is irregularity of attendance a major problem in your community -- one affecting the present grade placement of the students? Yes____ No____ Uncertain____

   If yes, what are the major causes for irregular attendance?

5. Do any of the families in your village go to camp or live out of town during part or most of your school year? Yes____ No____

   a. If yes, what percentage of the school population does this travel affect?________

   b. If yes, what is the average period of absence for those children whose attendance is affected by parents travelling away from the community?________

6. Have any of the pupils starting or transferring into your school been placed by you or your predecessors into lower grades than their age would normally call for? Yes____ No____ Uncertain____

7. When a child enters school at the usual age and progresses on the average of one grade a year, his normal age-grade placement is as follows:

Grade	Age	Grade	Age	Grade	Age
Primary	5-6	Third	8-9	Sixth	11-12
First	6-7	Fourth	9-10	Seventh	12-13
Second	7-8	Fifth	10-11	Eighth	13-14

   If you have pupils above the normal age in grade what is the one most important reason for this situation?

   ____ School not in session

   ____ Non-promotion

   ____ Irregular attendance

   ____ Late entrance

   ____ Other (please specify:____________________)

8. Comments______________________________

APPENDIX I. PROMOTION QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO ALASKAN NATIVE SCHOOLS

TO PRINCIPALS AND HEAD TEACHERS:

Results of preliminary surveys in connection with the Alaskan Native Education Study being conducted by the University of Alaska indicate a wide divergence of philosophy and practice in regard to the promotion and non-promotion of students in rural schools with native enrollments, and the ever-present problem of teacher-load or extra duties.

While it is realized that you are busy and questionnaires are somewhat time-consuming, the number of questions which appears below has been held to a minimum. It will be very helpful if you will complete the form and return it in the self-addressed envelope. Your answers pertaining to promotion and non-promotion should reflect, as nearly as possible, the policy of your school.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Charles K. Ray
Assoc. Prof. of Education
University of Alaska

1. Enrollment

A. Name of school______________________
B. Number of teachers in school______________________
C. Number of pupils enrolled in school______________________
D. Grades offered in school (i.e., beginners through sixth, first through eighth, etc.)______________________
E. Grades in which students are presently enrolled (Please circle): Beginners, 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10, 11,12
F. Approximate percentage of pupils who have one-fourth or more native blood (Indian, Aleut, Eskimo)__________
G. Village population (Approximate)______________________

  1. Non-native (percentage of residents with less than 1/4 native blood)______________________
  2. Native (percentage of residents with 1/4 or more native blood______________________

II. Promotions

A. What is the average rate of promotion from grade to grade for the majority (defined as approximately 75%) of pupils? (Check one)

1. ____The majority of pupils are promoted to a higher grade each year
2. ____The majority of pupils are promoted to a higher grade every two years
3. ____The majority of pupils are promoted to a higher grade every three years

B. About what percentage of the pupils who enter the first grade for the first time are promoted to the second grade at the end of the year? (Do not confuse beginners or kindergartners with first graders)

1. ____100%
2. ____75%
3. ____50%
4. ____25%
5. ____Less than 25%

C. Basis for promotion

What factors do you consider in determining whether a child should be promoted? Indicate the rank order of those given consideration by placing a "1" before the most important factor, a "2" before the second most important factor, etc.

1. ____Age (If checked, give maximum age limit for each group): grade 1___, grade 2___, grade 3___, grade 4___, grade 5___, grade 6 6___, grade 7___, grade 8___.
2. ____Average academic achievement in all subjects.
3. ____Achievement in reading
4. ____Achievement in the understanding and use of the English language
5. ____Innate intelligence
6. ____Effort
7. ____Social adjustment of pupil
8. ____Other factors (Please list in order of importance.) a.____ b.____ c.____ d.____

D. Basis for retention

What factors make it necessary for a child to remain more than one year in a grade? Indicate the rank order of those given consideration by placing a "1" before the most important factor, a "2" before the second most important factor, etc.

1. _____Lack of interest on the part of the pupil
2. _____Lack of effort on the part of the pupil
3. _____Lack of intelligence to comprehend the work
4. _____Lack of maturity to comprehend the work
5. _____Language handicap
6. _____Cultural or environmental handicap
   Specify_____________________________
7. _____Non-attendance at school
8. _____Curriculum not suited to the aptitudes of the pupil
9. _____In order to retain pupil in local school longer since he will not continue his education after completing the highest grade offered in the village.
10. _____Other factors (Please list in order of importance) a._____ b._____ c._____ d._____

III. A. What provisions do you make for the child who is above average in scholastic ability? (Check each practice which you employ)

1. _____Year by year promotion; regular work supplemented by a broadened, enriched program
2. _____Academic skills stressed to a greater degree than with the average pupil
3. _____Acceleration (Promoting more frequently than with the average pupil)
   Indicate the percentage of pupils who are normally accelerated

   a. _____50% or more of the pupils
   b. _____Between 25% and 50%
   c. _____Between 10% and 25%
   d. _____Between 5% and 10%
   e. _____Between 1% and 5%
   f. _____Fewer than 1%

B. What provisions do you make for the child who is retarded in school? (Check each practice which you employ)

1. _____Individual help during study and class periods
2. _____Special classes
3. _____Lower minimum requirements for promotion
4. _____Basic training for a vocation
5. _____Other (Please specify)_________________

IV. Level of education

A. Ignoring reality for the moment, what minimum level of education do you believe should be attained by the majority (defined as approximately 75%) of the students in your village before their formal schooling ends? (Express in grade which should be completed, i.e., fourth grade, sixth grade, eighth, tenth, high school graduation, etc.)

____

B. Realistically, considering all the problems faced by pupils in your village, what level of education do you think the majority (75%) of students will complete before their formal schooling ends. (Also express in grade which will be completed)________

V. Teacher Load

This question applies only to full-time teachers and the teaching principal (or head-teacher) of a school during the regular academic school year. Please give an approximation of the hours per week spent on each task. In the event there is more than one full-time teacher, give the average number of hours spent by each teacher. For example, if there are five full-time teachers (excluding the head-teacher) who spend a total of thirty hours per week supervising the lunch program, list "six" before item 3, under "Full-time teachers."

	Head-Teacher	Full-time Teacher	
1.	_____ hours	_____ hours	Classroom instruction
2.	_____ hours	_____ hours	Classroom activities (planning lessons, grading papers, etc.)
3.	_____ hours	_____ hours	Supervision of lunch program
4.	_____ hours	_____ hours	Radio schedules
5.	_____ hours	_____ hours	Medical work and village health program
6.	_____ hours	_____ hours	Native cooperative stores
7.	_____ hours	_____ hours	Adult education
8.	_____ hours	_____ hours	Community activities
9.	_____ hours	_____ hours	Welfare cases
10.	_____ hours	_____ hours	Other (Please specify)

____

VI. Comments ______________________________

____
Name and position of person completing form

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